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THE

MYSTERY

OF

GODLINESS,

WHEREIN THE

DEITY OF CHRIST IS PROVED

UPON NO OTHER EVIDENCE THAN THE WORD OF GOD, AND WITH NO OTHER VIEW THAN FOR THE SALVATION OF MEN.

BY THE

REV. THOMAS BRADBURY.

Know that for THY SAKE I have suffered rebuke. Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by THY NAME, O Lord God of Hosts.—JER. xv. 15, 16.

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THE

MYSTERY OF GODLINESS.

CHAPTER I.

GOD WAS BELIEVED ON IN THE WORLD.

These words carry our thoughts into the fifth branch of the Christian religion, or, as the Apostle calls it, "the record that God has given of his Son." And it is, like all the rest, a mystery of godliness; that God should be "manifest in the flesh;" and after all the scandal that he met with there, "justified in the spirit;" that when he was refused of men, he should be "seen of angels;" and upon the contradiction of the Jews, "preached unto the gentiles;" and this so very effectual to their advantage, and his reputation, that he is "believed on in the world." I shall here proceed by that method which I have observed all along in the other parts of this glorious subject; that is,

1. Show you the sense of the phrase, or what it is for the world to believe on Christ.

2. Open this as an argument of his true Divinity; that He who is so believed on can be no other than the Most High God.

3. Consider it as a mystery, that bears a place among those many things that are too wonderful for us; such as are high, and we cannot attain unto.

4. Let you see the benefit of such a doctrine: it is

a mystery of godliness, and helps on the religion that ought to be our concern and practice.

I. We must inquire what is further said of Him, concerning whom we have heard so much already; and the branch that I am now upon gives us glad tidings indeed. They tell us of a glory to God in the highest; they introduce a peace upon earth, and proclaim a good will towards men. We have heard before that he was preached unto the gentiles among people who sought him not, and were not called by his name, but continued without Christ for several generations, strangers and foreigners. Now, it is a natural inquiry, To what purpose is the report carried among the gentiles, which had so little influence on the Jews? Is Christ any gainer in his revenue, or they in their salvation? What is the advantage of it? We may answer, much every way, because he was "believed on in the world."

This part of our religion tallies exactly to the other, that we were last upon. There is no proportion between his being "manifest in the flesh," and "justified in the Spirit." Thousands saw him, and heard him, to whom the Spirit gave no such testimony. The witnesses to his incarnation were saints and sinners, Jews and Greeks, good and bad, friends and enemies. Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God among them by signs and miracles, which God did by him in the midst of them, as they themselves also knew. But when he is justified, admired, approved of, and heartily chosen, this was only done by those to whom the Spirit had glorified him. Now, though there is no proportion between his being manifest and his being justified; yet there is something that looks like it between the fourth and fifth branches of our religion. His being preached unto the gentiles is answered by this, that he was believed on in the world. Not but that several would hear the former, who are eternal strangers to the latter; for "death and destruction say, We have heard the fame of him with our ears."

But there is a harmony between these parts of the

Christian doctrine in two particulars; 1. The success or result of his being preached, is, that he is believed on. To this end did he receive gifts for men, and gave some apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. 2. The place where this attempt was made, is that where no such event could be expected. He is preached among the gentiles; those parts where grace and revelation had employed no culture, the unprepared regions of the earth. Well, he is believed on in the world, in these unlikely countries. As the day star had arisen upon the people that sat in darkness and saw no light, so it did not shine out in vain, but made known to them a salvation by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, and guided their feet into the way of peace. In opening out this head of Divinity, I shall observe both the things now mentioned.

1. What it is for any people to *believe* on Christ.
2. That thus he was believed on *in the world.*

1. What is it for him to be believed on? This is a word of great repute in the New Testament, and very often expresses the whole of our religion, as it takes in both the duty and the expectation of a Christian. And though sometimes it signifies only a bare assent to the truth of what he said, yet the more usual meaning is of a greater latitude. It may be considered several ways.

As regarding the *doctrine* that Christ has revealed, believing is being satisfied that it is all true. As regarding his *person*, believing is closing with him as the anointed of God. In respect to our *hope*, believing is that dependence by which we receive the benefits that he gives, and wait for those that he has promised. With respect to our *duty*, believing goes out into life and practice. It bears all these interpretations in the book of God. And as in our text we are called to consider the success of his gospel among the gentiles, so when it is said he was "believed on in the world," I think we may take the expression in its whole latitude, and you will find that they who

indeed believe on him, may have the following characters affirmed of them.

They receive the testimony that he has given of himself; they look upon him as the only Saviour of a lost race; they rely upon the righteousness that he has brought in for their acceptance with God; they derive from his fulness the graces of the Holy Spirit; they increase in the life of God by supplies from him; they regard him as their great comforter in every time of need; they obey him in all manner of conversation; in particular, they live in the acts of religious worship to him; they trust in him for a protection to the end of life; they look to him as the finisher of their faith. All these things go by the name of *believing;* and though a good man may not have them in an equal evidence, yet there is such a connection among them, that where there is one, there are all.

(1.) I begin with that which seems to be the lowest act of faith: and that is receiving the testimony he has given of himself; believing that his doctrine is of God, that it came from above. This takes in not only what he said in person to his disciples, whom he had chosen, but what he has since told them by the Holy Ghost, and with which revelations he has completed the rule of faith and hope. So that no man can make any additions to the words of the prophecy of this book: he has "sealed up the sayings." Believing in this case is depending upon the authority of the Scriptures, that they are given by inspiration of God, and that by them the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work. He that sets up any other rule besides the Bible, either for our practice or comfort, is no believer; because in the revelation that a Saviour gives of himself, he has struck off our regard from every one else. Our faith is never to stand in the wisdom of men.

And, whatever insinuations are given to the contrary, there is nothing that my soul more abhors, than to set up the decrees of men as the grounds of believing. That is rather to deny the faith than to pro-

mote it. We do not believe in creeds, catechisms, and confessions, much less in those persons who compiled them. All the profession that can be made upon these heads is, that we take the doctrine as it is there expressed, to agree with the revelation contained in the Scriptures. "We write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge, and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end." "Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived;" in opposition to whom, we continue in the things that we have learned and been assured of, knowing of whom we have learned them; and that from children we have known the Scriptures, which are able to make us wise to salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

You may think that such a believing as this, is no great matter: that we grow into it by time; it is only the manufacture of education, and is established by the laws of the country. And indeed if we are believers to no other purpose than this, it is far from being the faith I am speaking of. But nevertheless, the Scripture has placed our receiving the testimony of Christ Jesus a great deal higher than some are apt to imagine. What a noble account does John the Baptist give of such a believer? What Christ had seen and heard, that he testified; and—he that received his testimony has set to his seal that God is true. John iii. 32, 33. He has given a sort of assurance to all the promises that are upon record. He is a voucher to the Divine faithfulness in the midst of an unbelieving world; and therefore our Saviour makes it no small matter to be received even in this sense. "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness." His enemies came with a snare, if not with a scorn, saying, "Master, we know thou art righteous, and teachest the way of God in truth." But it is what they were not satisfied in, though, as he said, none could convince him of evil.

And indeed there is a great difference between a man's being able to run down the evidence that is

given of the Christian religion, and his receiving the love of that truth. Many a one dare not deny it, who yet cannot be said to believe it. We read of some "Jews who believed on him," of whom he said afterwards, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do:—because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not: which of you convinces me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do not ye believe me? He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." John viii. 31. 44—47. I am apt to think it is with revealed religion as it is with natural. There are thousands who cannot get over the arguments they meet with for the being of a God, and yet are fools enough to say in their hearts, "There is no God." "Their minds and consciences are defiled: they profess that they know God, but in works they deny him; being abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate." Tit. i. 15, 16. When these people are converted, their believing is to quite another purpose; which shows it to be from quite another principle. Just so it is with the authority of Christ in the things that he has said of himself. Though a person may not know how to dispute against them, yet there is a great deal more goes to a thorough conviction.

When our Saviour had sent the disciples of John back to their master, with that which would confirm him, and might persuade them, that the dead are raised, the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, and the lepers are cleansed, he adds, "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me;" as if he should say, "Notwithstanding all the evidence that makes you converts, yet the work must be ascribed to a Divine power as well as a moving argument; for that which abundantly satisfies you, will be of no weight to millions of other people." We may complain, after all our pains to establish a doctrine that is called the wisdom of God, "Who has believed our report?" People rather take the Christian religion for granted, than look into it; and the consequence of

this is, that they will be "carried away with every wind of doctrine." Though the ministration of the Spirit is glorious, though they who are employed in it use great plainness of speech, though they renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of the Lord deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God; yet after all this, our gospel is hid, and many are lost. We have need, therefore, not only to look into the book of God, but at the time of doing it, to waft up the same desire with David, "Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." And there is the more occasion for this, when "the god of this world has blinded the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, should shine into their hearts."

What is it that makes a believer, and gives him a right persuasion, that the testimony we have of Jesus Christ is true? I answer, there is a great deal of what we call moral evidence. We have a consistency in the parts, a harmony in the whole, a strain of piety running through, and a demonstration of miracles bearing witness. But all this will not do, till he who caused the light to shine out of darkness, shines into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Peter told our Lord what men said of him; some that he was Elias, some John the Baptist, others that one of the old prophets was risen again. All the opinions proclaimed him to be a wonderful person; and had he been any of these, no manner of doubt, mighty works would have shown themselves in him. I cannot say, but that one raised from the dead might have been able to do as many miracles. But this was not believing him to be what he really was. Though in these imaginations they supposed a great deal, yet not enough.

Now the question is, upon what grounds any could say, he was more than a prophet returned into the

world, and no less than the Christ of God? Our Saviour says to Peter, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, flesh and blood has not revealed this to thee, but my Father who is in heaven." "Flesh and blood," that is, human reason, employed upon these observations, might prove him to be more than a man; but here is another evidence given to him, that can proceed from none but God. Well, thus he was "believed on in the world;" his gospel was approved of. The word that they heard of the apostles, was not received as the word of man, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, that works effectually in those that believe, 1 Thes. ii. 13. He takes notice of this to the Thessalonians; "Our testimony among you was believed." This is the ground of all: we do well to take heed to the sure word of prophecy; if we cease to take heed to that, no doctrines of the Christian revelation will ever impress us. They are recommended to us, as not coming by the will of man, but that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

(2.) They that believe on Christ, look upon him as the only Saviour of a lost world. This was the great matter of his testimony, when the Jews asked, "What shall we do, that we may work the work of God?" The meaning of the question seems to be this: "What is that particular duty which above all others God expects from us? What is the obedience that may be called working the work of God?" He answers, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom he has sent." Here the matter stuck. His enemies could not deny him to be richly furnished; but his being the Christ, the anointed of God, the Messiah, the Interpreter, who is one among a thousand, the seed of the woman, the Son of Abraham, is what they could not imagine. "They stumbled at that stumbling-stone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone, and a rock of offence, and whoever believes on him shall not be ashamed." Rom. ix. 32, 33.

Therefore it is said, that "he was in the world, and

the world was made by him, and the world knew him not;" that is, they knew not what they were chiefly to have known. "He came to his own, and his own received him not;" not but that they followed him with esteem and wonder, but they did not receive him as the gift of God, as the great appointment of infinite wisdom, as the hope of Israel, and the substance of those promises that were made to the fathers. To them that thus received him, gave he power to become the sons of God; it was a sort of Divine act; even to them that believe on his name. Their believing is not put upon the clearness of the evidence, and their own studious impartial searches, but upon a higher nature; they were "born not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God."

This is what he all along insisted on; to this John bare witness, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." And John's disciples who were sent to him, gave this confession, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel." Thus the woman of Samaria speaks, "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?" And so say the men of the city to her again, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Thus they speak of him to others, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write." By which way of arguing, you see how they understood the Scriptures of truth. They were delivered at sundry times, and in divers manners; they had laws, promises, types, and histories; but, like so many lines, they were all tending to one point. Thus our Saviour speaks of himself, in such language as no prophet ever used. He stood in the last and great day of the feast, and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. John vii. 37.

It would have been in vain for any to plead then as some do now, that this was merely a speculation.

"Let but people mind their duty, live honestly, and carefully, and they shall never be condemned for not believing what they cannot understand." This vain talking is what the Scripture has left us no room for. Our Lord tells them plainly, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." He saith again, "All that came before me are thieves and robbers: I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall find pasture." And it was a proper question that John's disciples came with, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Several had appeared in different ages, to make known the will of God, and in particular their own great master, but there was no more than One that should come as Mediator between God and man. It was life eternal to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he had sent. John xvii. 3.

Cornelius was a person who gave alms, and had a good report of all men, and prayed always; that is, devotion was his habit and his practice; and yet God bids him send to Joppa for Peter, who would tell him words whereby he should be saved, Acts x. 6. And what are these words, but a report of Jesus Christ? For, as he had observed to the Jews before, There is salvation in no other, neither any other name given under heaven among men; so he does the same again. "The word," says he, "which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, that word ye know, which was published through all Judea, and began from Galilee, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins." Thus it was foretold he should be preached, agreeable to what he said himself, "Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth; for I am the Lord, and there is none else." The apostle gives it as a maxim, that "other foundation can no man lay, besides that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. iii. 11.

So that believing in him is collecting and centering

all our hopes on him, rejecting all other mediators as physicians of no value; looking upon him as the way, the truth, and the life, that no man can come unto the Father but by him. He is, as the very devils confessed him to be, "The Holy One of God." The New Testament has made so great an account of this, that certainly it must be of the last importance to our salvation. If mere doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, which some people set in opposition to faith, would have done, there was no need to have puzzled the world with the claims of a person who was "set for the fall and the rising again of many in Israel, and a sign that should be spoken against." Paul, touching the righteousness of the law, was blameless, and yet at that time "the chief of sinners." He therefore desires to be found in none of that righteousness, but only in one that came from God by faith. But this leads me to show,

(3.) Believing in Christ is relying upon the righteousness, that he has brought in for our acceptance with God. This is easily talked of, but the soul that ever knew what it meant, finds it the hardest thing in the world. It is easier to perform a hundred duties, than to deny one of them. It is what every good man is most jealous of himself about. He may hope that he loves Christ; there are several arguments of this, but he is afraid that something else is stealing into his soul as the matter of his rejoicing. The pleasures that flow into a duty, and the reflection that afterwards he makes upon it, are not so easily kept out of his hopes of justification. It is a very hard thing, after we have done all, to sit down with patience and say, "We are unprofitable servants." This was the misery of the Jews; they had a zeal of God, they went about to establish a righteousness of their own, and would not submit themselves to the righteousness of God, Rom. x. 3. Now, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

And this is believing, not neglecting our duty, but looking beyond it to something else as the great atone-

ment. "To him that works is the reward reckoned not of grace, but of debt; but to him that works not," that is, not with any expectation of being pardoned for it, "but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, to him his faith is imputed for righteousness," Rom. iv. 4, 5. This is believing, and before a soul is brought to it, the Holy Spirit has been thoroughly at work with him. It may be supposed of every one who relies on the merits of Christ, that he owns, that he feels the pollution of his nature, according to that cry of the church, Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and ourselves as an unclean thing. He sees the terrors of the law. When the commandment comes, sin revives, and he dies. He beholds the justice of God, who will by no means clear the guilty, and in whose sight no flesh living can be justified. He confesses the vanity of all his own endeavours, to answer the demands of a righteous Creator. How shall man be just with God, or how shall he be pure who is born of a woman? And oh! how desirable to such a one will Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant be, and the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than the blood of Abel! Heb. xii. 24.

The more you value the death of Christ, the greater evidence do you give of believing. The apostle wanted to know the fellowship of his sufferings, and to be conformed to his death. Him has God set forth as a propitiation for our sins through faith in his blood. He in his own person is the great propitiation, the Paschal Lamb, Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. But the particular notice that our faith takes, is of his blood. He was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification, Phil. iii. 10; Rom. iii. 25; 1 Cor. v. 7; Rom. iv. 25.

Those people that deny the infinite evil of sin, (by which we mean its being directed against an infinite majesty, and deserving an eternal punishment,) these are enemies to the cross of Christ; they make it a needless thing, and what the world might have done without. But whatever arguments persons may have against the satisfaction made to Divine justice, one

shake of an uneasy conscience will set them to rights; they will then see, that without shedding of blood, there could be no remission. This is believing; our persons, our duties, or as they are called, our garments, are washed in the blood of the Lamb. It is here that faith takes a fast hold, that Christ has loved us, and given himself for us, having washed us from our sins in his own blood. A poor convinced soul finds he is undone, and that there is no standing in God's sight when once he is angry; and it is only owing to him from whom we have received the atonement, that we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, Psal. cxxx. 3; Rom. v. 2.

(4.) Believing in Christ is deriving from his fulness the principles of a new life. The satisfaction that he has made, was with a view to this. "He loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word," Eph. v. 25, 26. Conversion is a looking to him as the author of our faith. Then is Christ formed in us; from that time we are his people, and feel his power. He sends out his servants to open our eyes, to turn us from darkness to light; not that they can do it, for who is sufficient for these things? But the Son quickens whom he will, John v. 21. Thus he speaks to Paul in a vision at Corinth, "I have much people in this city," Acts xviii. 10. He sees us in our bondage as well as in our guilt, and if from both these the Son make us free, then are we free indeed. In which words he is to be understood of spiritual liberty, having stated the opposite condition in these terms: "He that commits sin, is the servant of sin."

This is believing; then we begin to live, or rather Christ lives in us, and the life we live in the flesh is by faith in the Son of God; so that when it is said, that he is "preached among the gentiles," and "believed on in the world," the meaning is, he has made them alive. He is the "head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him who filleth all in all. And you hath he quickened who

were dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. i. 23; ii. 1. The Scripture has represented him as an agent in our conversion. When I am lifted up, said he, I will draw all men unto me, John xii. 32. "The mountain of the Lord's house is exalted above the hills. He will teach us of his law, and we will walk in his way." The believer has not only a new state, having passed from death to life, but a new nature, he is brought from the power of Satan to the living God. Christ who pleads for him, does also plead with him, his own cause; and he does it in such a way, as to make all opposition flee. The strong man armed, has kept his goods in peace: but here is a stronger than he, who takes from him his armour wherein he trusted. This is the apostle's account of his own conversion. It pleased God to call him by his grace, and reveal his Son in him, and with that began his hopes of glory. This faith is of the operation of God, Gal. i. 15, 16.

(5.) Believing in Christ, is growing in the spiritual life. We are preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, established in the faith, as ye have been taught, and abounding therein with thanksgiving, Jude 1.; Col. ii. 6, 7. "I am come," said he, "that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly," John x. 10. To this purpose we read of his dwelling in our hearts by faith. This agrees with the language of his own prayer to the Father, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one," John xvii. 23. This will be thoroughly understood in the visions of another state, "In that day ye shall know, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and I in you," John xiv. 20. He told his disciples, I will go away and come again, because I live, ye shall live also. He that has begun a good work is to perform it to the day of Christ Jesus.

So that believing is a continued rest of soul upon him. Your faith must be often looking thither. Who is this that comes up out of the wilderness leaning on

her beloved? Thus he advises, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abides in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing." John xv. 4, 5.

(6.) When we believe in Christ, we regard him as our great Comforter in every time of need. There is a distinction that you ought to observe in this case, which will keep you out of a mistake that many people run into. I do not assert that faith always takes into it the joys of the Holy Ghost, for we know there are persons who sit in darkness and see no light, and yet fear the Lord and hearken to the voice of his servant. But you must own, that even these are looking to Jesus that they may be lightened. They have no other friend to trust to. This is a rock that is higher than themselves, where they seek a shelter when their souls are overwhelmed within them; and therefore they are exhorted to trust in the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God, Isa. l. 10; Psal. xxxiv. 5; lxi. 2.

I do not mean that the believer always has these comforts from a Saviour, but that he flies to him for them, and is encouraged by that gracious proclamation, "Come unto ME, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is he that says, Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." And thus he was promised. He is the root of Jesse, who shall stand for an ensign of the people, to which the gentiles shall seek; and his rest shall be glorious, Isa. xi. 10. Our lot is cast into a rolling world, which like the troubled sea, cannot rest, but sends up mire and dirt. Here we are floating, tossing, heaving, and cannot expect a full rest till we come to that which remains for the people of God, when a sea of waters shall be changed into one of glass, and instead of being unsettled any longer, we shall have crowns on our

heads, and harps in our hands, to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, Heb. iv. 9; Rev. xv. 2.

But even in this life our Redeemer does not leave us comfortless, or, as the word signifies, he does not leave us *orphans*. We are not fatherless, though our Head is gone up to Heaven, and we see him no more; or if we are so, yet our hope is in Him with whom the fatherless find mercy. "I will see you again," said he to his disciples, "and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." John xvi. 22. And that he told them in maintenance of a kind promise, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye shall weep and lament, and the world shall rejoice, and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." This he illustrates by a similitude that is very common, and yet very powerful. He takes the chief instance of nature to show the efficacy of grace, "A woman when she is in travail, has sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of a child, she remembers no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." And that unaccountable transition, from a sadness to a serenity of mind, was to be brought about by his coming again. The meaning of that I take to be twofold. Both these senses are included in it; first, It immediately refers to his conversation with the disciples after his passion, by which he gave infallible proofs of his rising again; this was a delightful interview to those who ran from his cross and wept over his grave. He showed them his hands and his feet, and then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. But, secondly, Surely the promise is more extended, and reaches further than to the blessings of those forty days. It belongs to all those upon whom he has bestowed the other Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who shall abide with us for ever. John xiv. 17—19. And he mentions this as a mystery, that this Spirit is one "whom the world cannot receive, because it sees him not, neither knows him; but ye know him, for he dwells with you, and shall be in you." And by those words he has prepared you to understand what fol-

lows, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you; yet a little while and the world sees me no more, but ye see me," i. e. by a faith that others have not; "because I live, ye shall live also." There is a connection in the parts of that promise, that shall reach through all the ages of time, whilst there is a believer upon earth; and from it he deduces another gracious promise; "He that has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me; and he that loves me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." This he repeats and enlarges, "If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Certainly though these phrases are to be guarded against any gross and impure exposition, yet they mean something.

There is a joy that is struck from a communion with Christ, whether a carnal world will allow it or no. He stands at the door and knocks; and if any man hears his voice, he comes in and sups with him. He knew the toil that his people were like to meet with, and therefore as they lacked nothing whilst he was among them, so they shall be as well furnished when he goes away. His bidding them "go and disciple all nations," was throwing them into a duty of the greatest compass; his ordering them to baptize into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, was engaging against them all the disdain of the earth; but what signifies that, when he saith, that he will be with them to the end of the world?

We find they used to set his promise over against all their troubles. As the Apostle argues, "Though I suffer these things, nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed;" as if he should say, he has already accounted for all that. Good people will have their sorrows; "without are fightings, within are fears;" and what must they flee to? Here is a plain way for their hope, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace; be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," John xvi.

33. Thus he arises, not only with life and virtue, but with healing under his wings. He is the consolation of Israel. His love is better than wine, and the smell of his garments than all spices. We sit under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet unto our taste. He that believes on him, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters. We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing, we have life in his name. The God of hope fills us with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

(7.) They that believe in Christ, are obedient to him in all manner of conversation. I know that a severe accuracy will not let this go by the name of faith; but as it always is the fruit of it, I shall not separate what God has joined together. It is certain that they who depend upon a Saviour are devoted to him; he is their lawgiver, they serve the Lord Christ. One is their Master, that is Christ. He purifies to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. And it is so much in vain to make a profession without this, that he reasons upon the folly of it, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?" "I have ordained you," says he, "that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples," John xv. 8, 16.

This is sometimes called the will of his Father, and sometimes he gives out the command in his own name. "The word that I speak is not mine, but the Father's who has sent me." And in his last prayer he says, "I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that whatever things thou hast given me are of thee, for I have given unto them the words that thou gavest me." And again afterwards, "I have given unto them thy word, and the world has hated them," John xvii. 6,

7, 14. Besides these, there are scriptures that assert the doctrine to be his own, though not exclusive of the Father; but yet he represents himself as the fountain of light and truth. Hence we read of those who not only know not God, but obey not the Gospel of his Son; and of our adorning the doctrine of GOD our Saviour in all things. He that abides in the doctrine of Christ, he has the Father and the Son. We are not without law to God, but under the law to Christ. It was for HIM that Paul suffered the loss of all things; he was so entirely devoted to him, that as always, so now, this was his earnest expectation and desire, that Christ should be magnified in his body, whether by life or death," Tit. ii. 10; 2 John 9; 1 Cor. ix. 21; Phil. i. 20; as if he had no other end above or beyond the magnifying of Christ; and this he grounds upon a principle that is of the greatest extent, "For to me to live is Christ." In preaching Christ, they warned every man, and taught every man, that they might present every man perfect in Christ, striving according to his working, who wrought in them mightily. In the name of Jesus every knee is to bow, of things in heaven, earth, and under the earth, Col. i. 28, 29; Phil. ii. 10.

(8.) In particular, they that believe in Christ, live in the acts of religious worship to him. They endeavour to walk worthy of him. He is the King of saints. It is he "who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us kings and priests to God and his Father." We are to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to him be glory both now and for ever, Amen," 2 Pet. iii. 18. They come to his footstool, they bow before his throne, and worship towards the place where his honour dwells.

To this did the providence of God give an early testimony. Wise men came from the east to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who is born King of the Jews, for we have seen his star, and are come to *worship him*," Mat. ii. 1, 2. It is making very little of that word to suppose that it means no more than

the presents they brought him; for "when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." Was this only for an opportunity to pay him a civil compliment? When they came into the house, "they saw the young child, with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped *him;* and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto *him* gifts, gold, and frankincense and myrrh." These I take for granted were the methods of adoration in their country. It was foretold of Christ, that the kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents. The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him, Psal. lxxii. 10, 11. They meant by what they did, a great deal more than homage to a temporal prince, because such a carriage was all a superfluity to an infant who could not receive it.

If it is said that these were heathens and idolaters, and therefore nothing ought to be concluded from their practice as a rule for us. The answer is very easy; they were now under a particular conduct from the great God. Providence brought them in as witnesses to him who was to be "the desire of all nations," Hag. ii. 7; there was a star to guide them thither, an extraordinary dream to direct them back again; and can we think he would suffer them to pollute the first honours that were paid to our Saviour with rank idolatry. Is it not natural to suppose, that these men were brought from afar with greater thoughts than merely because "a child was born, and a Son was given?" They do not speak of his miraculous conception, that he was the Son of a virgin, but regard him in a quality of which there was no visible appearance, as one "born King of the Jews," and as such a one they came to worship him. A king of the Jews had no relation to them, they were in no subjection to a prince of that country; but under this name they inquire for a Saviour, who being the object of their worship, must be conceived to have another nature besides the human. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all

the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. All they that be fat upon earth, shall eat and worship. All they that go down to the dust shall bow down before him; a seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. He shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba; prayer also shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised. His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun. Men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed. Psal. xxii. 27. 29, 30; lxxii. 15. 17.

To this agrees the practice of his own followers, whom he would no more suffer to call him "good," and fall down before him, than he would the young man in the gospel, if they had not been persuaded of another nature besides what came into the imaginations of that person. But when the word was made flesh and dwelt among them, they beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, John i. 14. What a strange acknowledgment does he receive from Nathanael, upon his telling him, "Before Philip called thee, whilst thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." Upon which he cries out, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel." A prophet might have said as much as this. Elisha told the king of Israel what the king of Syria had said in his bed-chamber, and therefore the conclusion from his seeing Nathanael under the fig-tree, could be no more than that of the Samaritan woman, "Sir, I perceive thou art a prophet." But as soon as ever he receives the knowledge of the truth, he professes another sort of regard. Though Christ *did* no more in that case than some prophets had done, yet he *was* much more than any prophet had been. The confession goes out in such language as was never used to any other, "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel." And our Lord is so far from correcting or holding in the zeal of the man, that he opens out the argument there was for it, "Ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man."

We find that as the apostles were better instructed, they went to greater examples of adoration. Peter fell at his feet, and cried out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." This he was led into by a surprise at the draught of fishes. It is a strange way of addressing one who had both given him a miracle and a favour. Why should he upon that talk of his departing from him, and why must that lead him into a confession of his being a sinful man? I take it for an impression of the same nature with that upon Isaiah, when he saw *his* glory in person, as Peter did in fact, "Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD OF HOSTS," Isa. vi. 5.

It was a very proper motion made by the Pharisees, when the multitude were singing Hosannah before him, "Master, rebuke thy disciples." That he ought to have done, if he had not looked upon himself as the great object of worship. For we find of whom these things were to be said, "Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord: *God* is the Lord who has shown us light," Psal. cxviii. 26, 27.

After his resurrection he gave way to the same practice, and that in a higher degree. We read that "when they saw him, they *worshipped* him; but some doubted." That the term of *worship* does not always signify a religious adoration, is certain; but that it sometimes does so, is as certain; and therefore the question is not what sense it may bear in other places, but what is more likely in this. Here we read of some that worshipped him, and of others that doubted. Doubted what? whether they should pay him an external civility? If he was not their Saviour, there could be no harm in bowing to him. If that was all the others meant by their worship, there need be no great dispute between them. But it is plain these doubts were about the truth of his resurrection. They who were satisfied of that, show it in a way that the rest durst not, and that is, by acts of religious worship. Nay, more than that, we read of his taking them as far as to Bethany, and blessing them, and whilst he blessed

them, he was parted from them, and taken up to heaven; and yet *then* it is said they *worshipped* him, Luke xxiv. 51, 52. Was this only an external compliment too? We pay such things to a creature, but never to an absent one. What can worshipping him, when he was gone, include less than their belief, that he is the Lord who "fills heaven and earth?" Had they regarded no more than his body, all respects to that were over; but we read their thoughts in their carriage, and it must not be said of them, that they worshipped they knew not what.

Nay, the great badge of the Christian religion, that which his disciples wear, is "the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Into this they are baptized; and what an odd character would it be to say, that we are resigned to one supreme and two subordinate Gods? that we are as much devoted to a higher and a lower creature, as we are to the Father of Spirits? The notion that baptism is not an act of worship, is such a degrading of that solemnity, that it only shows that people will say any thing to maintain their scheme. Is it not worship for me to give up myself to be the Lord's? To have his name called upon me? To enter into his covenant, and proclaim this to the world? Ought not my soul to go along with that surrender? Do I not then avouch the Lord to be my God, and depend upon the blessings that he has promised, and is not this worshipping? "One shall say, I am the Lord's, —and another shall subscribe with his hand to the Lord." What Lord is this? He gives the answer himself, "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no god." Isa. xliv. 5, 6.

(9.) Believing in Christ is trusting him for protection to the end of life. Our inheritance is reserved, our principles are imperfect. It does not appear either what we shall be, or what we shall have. Our great life is not revealed, but "hid with Christ in God;" and he who is our life is hid too. We are waiting

for the day when he shall appear, and we appear with him in glory. Col. iii. 3, 4. The grace that is to be brought to us, comes at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. i. 13. No security of the covenant, no stanchness of the promises, can set the Christian above his fears; and therefore he must look to One who can secure him till he gets home.

And for this, he has his eyes upon that Saviour, who is able to keep him from falling, and to present him faultless before his glory, with exceeding joy. We are preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. Jude 24. The perseverance of the saints is as true as it is comfortable; but it has been much opposed. Now, if the dispute is upon man's ability to save himself, and the sufficiency of those principles that are put into a believer to work through, and work out a salvation, we must give it up. There is no just man upon earth that does good, and sins not: a just man falls seven times a day. And if we had no other security than this, we must never affirm any thing of that nature. But you know the truth hinges upon something else; and that is, whether Christ can save to the uttermost those that come to him, and whether he has not said that he will. Our confidence is in this very thing, that he who has begun a good work, will perform it till the day of Christ. Phil. i. 6. So that, believing is depending upon him for what is behind.

Every Christian finds himself engaged in an unequal war: there is no fair match between the confederate powers of darkness, and the poor frail resolutions of a man. But the battle is the Lord's; and so our confidence is in One, who being made perfect through sufferings, is become the author of eternal salvation to as many as obey him. Heb. v. 9. This makes it needful that the just should live by his faith; the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. Believing is a continual rest of soul upon Christ. We in this wilderness are leaning on our beloved.—Here is a hope set before us; and to that we flee for a refuge, to lay hold upon it. This hope we have as an anchor sure and steadfast, and it enters into that

within the vail. The anchor takes its hold above, we have ours below, and keep pulling, and drawing, and bringing ourselves to. Thus we are pleading his righteousness afresh, that our God may multiply to pardon. "The life we live in the flesh, is by faith in the Son of God." Living in holiness is a renewed or a continued believing. We have never done with that faith till our life is at an end in the flesh, and we are gone up to the world of spirits.

(10.) Believing in Christ is looking to him as the "finisher of our faith;" as one that is to give the finishing stroke to his own work. His hands laid the foundation, as it was said of Zerubbabel, in the building of the temple, and his hands shall lay the top-stone with shouting. And what are they to shout, but "Grace, grace unto it?" that is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are to be "complete in *him*." It is he that saves εις το παντελες *to the last perfection*, to the end of the work, to the giving in all that is meant by it. Our proficiency is by degrees, and God knows, very slow ones. The righteous holds on his way, and he that has clean hands grows stronger and stronger. But the perfection comes all at once; one moment will give us the fulness of grace and purity, that here we have sought in vain.

Now, this comes from Christ: he is the head of principality and power. Every man is to be presented perfect in him: he is called the finisher of our faith. And, with respect to this great happiness, we die in faith, knowing that when we are absent from the body, we shall be present with the Lord. To be with Christ is far better; it is that which gives us a desire to depart. In this we have an eye to the full felicity of the soul, that in leaving one house of an earthly tabernacle, we shall be clothed upon with another house which is from heaven, and so mortality be swallowed up of life.

But besides this, with Christ we trust our bodies. Our flesh shall rest in hope; and, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. He is the

resurrection and the life; and whoever believes in him, though he were dead, yet shall he live, Psal. xvi. 9; 1 Thes. iv. 14; John xi. 25. They are called the dead in Christ, who shall rise first. His resurrection is considered two ways: First, as the pattern of ours; he being raised, is become the first fruits of them that slept; every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits, and then they that are Christ's at his coming, 1 Cor. xv. 23. And, secondly, He is the author of that great work. He changes and fashions these vile bodies like unto his glorious body, by a power that subdues all things to himself, Phil. iii. 21. They that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man; and they that hear shall live. Our Redeemer lives, and he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. So that, though after our skin, worms destroy this body, yet in our flesh we shall see God, whom we shall see for ourselves, and not for another, though our reins be consumed within us, John v. 25; Job xix. 25, 26, 27.

This it is to believe; and for these several benefits does our faith regard him, who was manifest in the flesh, and justified in the Spirit. He is seen of angels, and he is believed on in the world. We walk by faith, and they by sight. They behold him as he is; and though we at this distance do not see him, yet we love him; and in him, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with a joy unspeakable, and full of glory, 1 Pet. i. 8. This is the faith of God's elect, the employment that it is in, and the application that it makes. It is a faith in the Son of God, as well as in the Father. We believe in God, we believe also in him. This gives a virtue to all our religion: the Scriptures are no further able to make us wise to salvation, than through the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

II. I am now to open this account that is given of Him, as an argument of his DIVINITY; that he in whom the world are to believe, can be no other than the Most High God. You plainly find a distinction between the two natures in our blessed Lord. Some-

times he is represented as the medium, rather than the object of our faith: for faith being an act of worship, it ought to fix upon none but the supreme cause. "He that comes unto God, must believe that he is;" and there is a consideration that we may have of our Saviour wherein he cannot be the object of it. The apostle Peter is very particular, and speaks with all the caution that could be desired. He saith, Christ "was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God," 1 Pet. i. 20, 21.

Here you find two things; first, That as Mediator we do not believe *in* him, but *by* him. He does not receive our faith, but direct it and convey it. And, secondly, That the faith and hope of a Christian can be in no other than a God; and therefore, if we are not to have a higher consideration of a Redeemer, than as a middle person between God and us, we can never be said to believe *in him*. What care does the apostle take to tell us, that this is too much for a creature? And if there had not been Scriptures of another import, that reveal him to us as the proper object of our faith in the same way that the Father is, we could never have said so much of him. Now, these texts are not to be dashed against one another; there is no manner of contradiction between them.

We may, and ought to regard our Saviour in his two limited characters; First, as true and proper man; one "made of a woman." Thus he was frail in his body, and imperfect in the qualifications of his soul; he grew in knowledge as well as stature. There were things that he knew not. He came to a fig-tree, if he might find fruit on it. The hour of judgment is what no man knows, nor the angels, nor even the Son, but the Father. On this account he would not be called good, because "there is none good but one, that is God."

Secondly, even as Mediator he is to be considered in a lower station. For though that character takes into it a Divine Nature, yet he is situated between

God and man; below the one, and above the other; or rather, as high as the one, and as low as the other. Thus he was made under the law, and came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. And when all things shall be subdued, the Son himself must give up the kingdom to the Father, and be subject, that God may be all in all, 1 Cor. xv. 28. In this respect the Father is greater than he, John xiv. 28. But neither of these is a contradiction to those other accounts that we have of him. As man he was not equal to God in nature; as Mediator, he was not equal to him in place, but appeared "in the form of a servant." But in the existence that he had before he took upon him our nature, he "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Nor can we believe in him the several ways that I have opened to you, if he is not the only living and true God.

After this preliminary distinction, into which we are led by a cloud of witnesses, I may resume my argument, That he who is thus believed on in the world, deserves the name that is given him in this text, of the Most High God. By that expression I do not mean a titular deity. Those shuffling arts of language are unworthy of a minister, and scandalous to the Gospel that he preaches: we "have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully." As our exhortation is not of uncleanness, so neither is it of deceit or of guile; but as we are put in trust with the Gospel, so we preach, not as pleasing men, who may easily be imposed upon, but that God who searches the hearts, and knows what we mean in every disguise of speech, 1 Thes. ii. 3. For there is not a word in our mouths, but lo, he knows it altogether. We are not sent to trifle with mankind. If Christ is not God, it would be dangerous to call him so; and I should never dare to do it without a caution. But if he is, we need not be afraid of owning his title, against all the learning and violence that are brought into the quarrel; for it will be found, that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

I have already shown you what it is for him to be believed on; and as I think that account agrees with the whole current of the Bible, so I shall go over every one of those particulars again, and let you see that they can be true of none but the Most High God. You have heard that believing in him is, 1. Receiving the testimony that we have concerning him. 2. A looking upon him as the only Saviour of the world. 3. Relying upon the righteousness that he has provided. 4. Deriving from him a principle of grace. 5. Being supplied by him with an increase. 6. Regarding him as the great comforter of our souls. 7. Obeying him in all manner of conversation. 8. Giving him religious worship. 9. Trusting him for a protection; and, 10. Looking to him as the finisher of our faith. That these are things comprehended in our believing, will be plain enough to all that look into the Scriptures. Now, I see no danger in affirming, that every one of these particulars supposes him to be truly and eternally God, or otherwise our preaching is vain, and your faith is vain.

1. As believing signifies our receiving the testimony that is given concerning him, it concludes him to be a God, or otherwise we must look upon the New Testament as a strange book, if it does no more than proclaim the coming of a creature. They that bring good tidings, are ordered to lift up their voice with strength, to lift it up, and not be afraid, saying to the cities of Judah, Behold your *God*. Behold, the *Lord God* shall come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him. Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him, Isa. xl. 9, 10, 11. And this is he, who shall feed his flock like a shepherd. Why must there be warnings given, prophets raised up in every age, wonders and miracles wrought, and above all, the Holy Ghost sent down, merely to make way for a derived being, who, notwithstanding all his glory, is infinitely below the Father of Spirits?

It has been the design of God, ever since he made the world, to be worshipped in it. And he has taken ways to display himself for that very purpose. Thus

it pleased him to write out his perfections upon the heavens, which are the work of his fingers. He has added to these arguments the methods of his providence, by which a man is brought to say, "Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily, he is a God that judgeth in the earth." And these are so clear and valid, that the heathen are without excuse, because what may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has showed it to them, Rom. i. 19, 20. But there are still more eminent ways of making him known to the world. A Redeemer appears with a greater evidence than can ever be fetched out of the works of creation: he has something better than sun, moon, and stars, to tell mankind what he is. And must the Supreme God be discovered in these low and feeble methods? and shall a creature show himself to the world in ways more divine and glorious? Are we directed to find out the Father by the growth of the earth, and the beauty of the heavens? and can there be no revelation of the Son, but by sending him among us, with a train of miracles, signs, and wonders, and last of all, by the effusion of the Spirit? Is the Holy Ghost sent down to glorify the Son, and are we directed to the lowest parts of the creation, in our searches after the Father? Ask the beasts of the field, and they will tell thee, and the birds of the air will declare to thee. In these cases the honour is no way proportioned, we worship and serve the creature more than the Creator.

The greatest testimony that ever the world received was by the Holy Spirit. This is above all thunders, voices, ministers, prophets, and miracles. He was sent down from heaven; and what is he a witness to? What is his errand among us, both in forming the Scripture, and working upon the conscience? Christ tells us, "He shall glorify *me*, for he shall take of mine, and show it unto you," John xvi. 15. "We, saith the apostle, are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God has given to them that obey him," Acts v. 32. The dispensation of the Spirit is to lead us to a Saviour. And is our way to Him un-

der greater directions than ever that to a God was? Is there something in making him known more divine and glorious, than any methods that the Father himself has taken for several generations? Shall the greater person be talked of with lower discoveries? and shall a creature, a derived dependent being, have more train and retinue to his reputation, than ever was heard of for the Supreme Majesty of heaven and earth?

Certainly you must conclude, that He who shines into our hearts, does it to give us "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face (or person) of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. iv 6. We see in him the glory of a God; and on purpose that we may see it, more is done for us, and more in us than making a world. "To him give all the prophets witness;" and it was "the Spirit of Christ" in those prophets that bare this witness. They searched diligently into this salvation, namely the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. There are prophecies of the most early date; and these are matched with the testimony of the Holy Ghost in after ages. Now, what could be done more for a God?

And is all this profusion of evidence a tribute to one who is a creature? No; the Scripture has never given us an account so unequal and monstrous as that must have been. We are not directed to the creation, to things that do appear, for the proofs of an eternal power and godhead; and to things that do not appear, that from them we may have our conviction of a Saviour. This would be too much for him if he was not God; and therefore we are expressly told, when he was in the world, that the world was made by him. There are two interpretations given of these words, which are very different from one another, though they are both of them directed against the truth as it is in Jesus. Sometimes we find one of them insisted on, and sometimes another; for Satan is resolved to drive the nail that will go.

Some tell us, that the world made by him is the gospel church, which is a sort of a new world. But

to such expositors we may cry out with the apostle, "O foolish people, who has bewitched you?" Do but see what confusion it brings into the text. "He was in the world;" that is, in the church; "and the world was made by him;" that is, he is the author of the church; but then it is added, and "the world knew him not." Can this be understood of the church? Did not they know him? Yes, the very thing that made them his people, or rather proved them so, was their seeing "his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." He himself distinguished between the world and his people. "O righteous Father, the world has not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." But this shows that "the legs of the lame are not equal." It is with the adversaries of his divinity, as it was with those of his innocence, that their witness agrees not together.

Another interpretation which people are now driven to, is, that he made the world as an *instrument*. But did ever true language say that an instrument made any thing? Is it not enough that we talk error, but must we talk nonsense? Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shakes it? as if the rod should shake itself against him that lifts it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood. The world was made by Him, who was then in it, i. e. when he was made flesh, and dwelt among us. And, if this may be said of an instrument, how can any words go higher to the honour of the Supreme Agent, than these we have of him, that "all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." John i. 3.

What is the report that we have of him? John the Baptist was the greatest of his messengers, and he proclaims, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isa. xl. 1. 3. This passage in the Old Testament cannot without fraud and force be applied to a creature. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God."

Isa. xl. 1. And is not this to be understood of the Supreme Being? How is the comfort to flow or be revealed, but by the voice of him that cries in the wilderness? This is what John the Baptist said of himself, that he was the person described in that prophecy. He was, as his father Zacharias said of him, "sent before the face of the Lord, to prepare the way before him." Now this is called by the prophet preparing the way for our God, for the God of Israel, who was known by his relation to that people; for the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. Thus it is further said of John, that he was "the Prophet of the Highest," of the Most High: which is a name fit for none but Him, who is over all blessed for evermore. The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Psal. cxlvi. 10; Heb. xiii. 8.

2. In believing we look upon him as the only Saviour of the world; and this cannot be affirmed of one that is not God. "We know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." 1 John v. 20. You will find a great deal of difference between him and other good men, who have served their generation according to the will of God.

I take Moses to be the first in that character; a person honoured with the fullest commission, and the clearest credentials. "There arose not a prophet since in Israel like to Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." It was needful that the people should believe his being sent from God, that he did not those things of his own mind. Of him we have this character in the New Testament, that he was "faithful to him that appointed him in all his house." But then, it is there observed, that he was only so faithful "as a servant, and in testimony of things that were to be spoken after." Heb. iii. 5. There was no fear of mistaking him for a God; the distinction was al-

ways plain and full between himself and the Divine Majesty whom he represented. He was made "a god to Pharaoh;" but that sentence does not deserve a place in the objection. The man must be very ignorant indeed, who concludes his deity from that. He all along told them, that their murmurings were not against him, but the Lord. He did every thing according to the pattern showed him in the mount; and therefore says himself in that song, "He (i. e. God) loved the people; all his saints are in thine hand; they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words; Moses commanded us a law;" he always directed them to a greater than himself. Deut. xxxiii. 3, 4.

The people once made choice of him for a Mediator. Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say, and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it and do it. But did he take this honour to himself? No; he makes an advantage of the people's desire to have a middle person between God and them, and upon that tells them of our blessed Saviour. You find the prophecy connected with that very case. "The Lord thy God will raise up to thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto *him* shall ye hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, lest I die. And the Lord said unto me, they have well spoken that which they have spoken, I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee," Deut. xviii. 15—17. This is a passage that the New Testament makes great use of. The apostle Peter pleads from it, that God shall send Jesus, who before was preached unto you; whom the heavens must receive till the times of the restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up

unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you, Acts iii. 20—22. So the martyr Stephen, when he had given an account of the great things that Moses had done, by how many changes, and through how many contradictions he was formed to the deliverance of the people out of Egypt, fixes on that one point, This is that Moses who said unto the children of Israel, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, Acts vii. 37.

So that upon the whole you find though Moses had such a commission as was never equalled, and those credentials that were never exceeded, yet still he referred the people to one above and beyond himself, one that was their God, and who in the fulness of time would be their prophet. Now you will observe, though the apostle gives it as a noble character of Christ, that he was faithful to him that appointed him, even as Moses was faithful in all his house; yet he adds, This man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, Heb. iii. 2, 3; not upon account of faithfulness, for that an inferior may have equally with a superior. A man, whom you trust with twenty shillings, is as honest as one that manages a concern of ten thousand pounds; as Moses is said to be faithful in all things, so *in that* he could not be exceeded. But Christ is worthy of more glory upon another account, from the dignity of his person, "inasmuch as he that builded the house has more honour than the house." By his house is meant his people, his church, the whole family, both in heaven and earth. Moses was only a servant to these, and therefore could have no more than his particular share with them; but Christ having built the whole house, has more honour than all of it put together, than the whole assembly of saints and angels, whose names are written in heaven. And can this be conceived of a creature? No; "Every house is built by some man, but he that built all things is *God*." Christ is said to be this builder in the former verse; and to show us of what nature that is to be understood, he calls him

a God in this. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant," i. e. he fulfilled his orders; he did every thing according to the pattern showed him in the mount, but this was "as a testimony of those things that were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over his *own* house, whose house we are," Heb. iii. 5, 6. It could not be said of Moses that the Israelites were his. When God tells him, Thy people whom thou broughtest out of Egypt have rebelled, he returned the relative term back again, Lord, they are *thy* people and thy inheritance whom *thou* hast purchased for thyself: and so he says in another place, "Have I conceived all this people?" But Christ calls the house his own, and who must this be?

Well, the apostle applies to him that passage out of the xcv. Psalm, "Harden not your hearts as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness," as they did who are said to tempt Christ; and then concludes thus, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." I take these characters to be joined, or otherwise I can see no force in his argument, and no propriety in his quotation. He who is said to be the builder of all things, the builder of his house, the Son over his own house, is at last called *the living God*, not by obscure and uncertain consequences, but in the plain and natural language of Scripture.

Let none say that we affirm this without the authority of the Bible, or that it comes in among the things that man's wisdom teaches. It is as plainly a doctrine that the Holy Ghost teaches as any can be, and appears so to every one who will compare spiritual things with spiritual. Do we call him your only Saviour who is not your God? No, we dare not. The work that he has done for you, and must do in you, is too great and good for any thing but Divinity, and therefore the titles are joined; he is a just God, and a Saviour, and there is none besides him. David's defence was of God, which may be understood of a temporal deliverance; and is our greatest happiness from a creature? No; we have very noble notions of

a Deity from our interest in him; for our God is the God of salvation, and to God the Lord belong the issues from death, Psalm lxviii. 20. Compare such titles as these with what is said of Christ, that there is salvation in no other; upon which account he goes by that name, for "the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God!" So old Simeon says, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation; which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel," Luke ii. 29—31. Your salvation is of that Lord who made heaven and earth; and who is this, but the same, who being made perfect from his sufferings, became the author of eternal salvation to as many as obey him? Thus he is placed as "salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." What is got by talking of a Saviour who is not a God? We lose our hope, and He his praise. But I trust that you have not so learned Christ. You may say of him in whom your confidence is placed, "This is our God for ever and ever, and he shall be our guide even unto death," Psalm xlviii. 14.

3. Believing in Christ Jesus, is relying upon the righteousness that he has brought in. We find that none can stand in God's sight when once he is angry, and marks iniquity, and this we are sure he does. "Thou settest our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." Here we have nothing to flee to but the blood of sprinkling. It is called so from that which was typical of it under the Old Testament, Heb. ix. 19. 21. You there see how far the virtue of it was extended. "When he had spoken every precept, he took the blood of calves and goats, and sprinkled both the book and all the people." He sprinkled the book to bring the law within the covenant of grace, to take away the curse that was in it, and continues upon all those that are under it. He sprinkled the people to take off their guilt, that they might be purified from an evil conscience. Nay, it is said, he sprinkled with blood the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry; and in particular we read,

that he threw some of this blood upon the mercy seat, which was supposed to be the throne of God, and upon the tabernacle, which was his house, and upon the vessels of the ministry, which were his furniture, to show that heaven itself must be rendered propitious by an atonement or satisfaction; and these, as the apostle tells us, were patterns of things in the heavens. But says he, "The heavenly things themselves," the real happiness, and all the grace that leads to it, "were to be purified with better sacrifices than these." And what are they? Christ has by his own blood gone into the holy place, to appear in the presence of God for us.

That he who died was a man, a partaker of flesh and blood, is true enough; for that reason he was in all things made like unto his brethren, that by death he might subdue him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. Our nature was needful to make his dying a *reality*, but whence did it derive the merit to make it a *satisfaction?* This supposes another nature that is without any robbery equal to God. And his obedience to death, even the death of the cross, could be only valid to his own glory, and our happiness, from the antecedent dignity of his person. Being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, he did by himself purge away our sins. Heb. i. 3.

So that when we read of his sufferings in the most pathetic terms, that he was broken, grieved, taken from prison, and from judgment, there is this thrown in, "Who shall declare his generation?" Isa. liii. 8. It was an easy matter to trace his family, that he was of the seed of David, according to the flesh; and therefore that is not the generation which the prophet speaks of as a matter not to be declared. For he would say himself, Ye know who I am, and whence I came, but He who sent me is true, whom ye know not. Who has ascended up into heaven, or descended? who has gathered the wind in his fists? who has bound the waters in a garment? who has established

all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his Son's name, declare if thou canst tell? Prov. xxx. 4.

What would the smiting of the Shepherd have signified, if the sword had not been directed by God against the man that was his fellow? and why should he be called God's righteous servant at the time that it pleased the Father to bruise him, and put him to grief? Why should it be said, By his knowledge shall he justify many, when the way of his doing it, is bearing their iniquity? His death was soon over, and how came he in that to bring in an everlasting righteousness? The virtue was not in his sufferings, but in his person, and therefore it is said, "This is the name whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness." Jer. xxiii. 6. As Jehovah he must live for ever; as our righteousness, he was obliged to die; for he put away sin by the offering of himself. He who was crucified must be a man. He who by *that* brought in a righteousness must be Jehovah. It appears by this, that he who paid the price was equal to him that received it.

That objection is only a sound, That if He who made the satisfaction was a God, then the same person both gave it and took it. This proves that what we speak of is a *mystery*, but it does not for that cease to be a truth; for the same argument lies almost against every thing in religion. Is our grace and duty any thing else but what God both gives and receives? "All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." Is it not said as plainly as it can be in words, that Christ presents us to himself? Eph. v. 27; and therefore the objection that some are so proud of, is but a flash of powder that makes a blaze, but does no execution. There is no more contradiction in this than there is in all the other articles of religion, that he who gives the satisfaction is also to take it. God reconciles us to himself; 2 Cor. v. 18; he is both the reconciler and the person reconciled. Be not driven away from the hope of the gospel by the vain splutter of men. This is a poor wind of

doctrine indeed, and none but mere children can be carried away with it.

But, to return to my argument: Why should He who is our righteousness be called Jehovah? The name is incommunicable, and belongs to none but the Most High. Angels are called gods, and so are magistrates, There are lords many, and gods many; but thou whose name alone is Jehovah art the Most High over all the earth. Psal. lxxxiii. 18. If this is given to a creature, we cannot say that his name *alone* is Jehovah. And the Scripture by throwing about titles with so much confusion, has left us no distinction between God and a creature. But you may be sure, as God will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain, so the Holy Spirit would not be guilty of that crime. Though in bringing in a righteousness, Christ submitted to death, yet he did it in the quality of Jehovah, the great original, the fundamental life and being.

There is an answer, such a one as it is, to this argument, That the church is called "the Lord our righteousness." She is so indeed, and I need do no more than read you the passage, and leave you to judge with what propriety it is pleaded. "In those days, and at that time, I will cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah shall be saved, and Jerusalem dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness," Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16. I ought to make an apology for giving an answer to this argument. It is obvious to every one, that the title must be understood of Christ, and can only be applied to his people on the account of their relation to him. As he is called Israel, and God is called Jacob, so they are called "the Lord our righteousness," Isa. xlix. 3; Psal. xxiv. 6. But there is one thing more that I shall observe from these words, and that is, the New Testament Church is here described by the profession they were to make of their faith in one who is Jehovah, and one who is their

righteousness; and therefore when people shuffle with his Divinity, and deny his satisfaction, they are not that Judah and Jerusalem who are called by the name.

4. Believing is deriving from him a principle of grace. Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. He quickens those who were dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. iii. 17; ii. 1; and how should he do this, if he had not the fulness of him who fills all in all? This is all along represented as the chief creation, compared to the exceeding greatness of God's power in raising Christ from the dead, and would never be attributed to any agent but one who does according to his pleasure. And the apostle, who writes to a people that had this experience, lets them know, that their friend is no less than the Most High. They are born of the incorruptible seed, the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever, 1 Pet. i. 23. Whether you understand this of Christ the personal Word, or of the everlasting Gospel, it is all one to the argument. That which he puts the advantage upon, is their having tasted that the *Lord* is gracious, 1 Pet. ii. 3. This you know is an Old Testament phrase, a way of speaking that God's people have always used. "O taste and see that the Lord is good," Psal. xxxiv. 8. David cannot be supposed to design by this Lord any other than Him whom he had in heaven alone, and besides whom he could desire none upon earth. And what Lord is that whom the apostle saith they had tasted to be gracious? One whom they were still to come to as a living stone, disallowed of men, but chosen of God and precious, 1 Pet. ii. 4. These latter words make it evident, that it can be understood of none but Christ, as the former make it equally evident, it can be understood of none but God. Now why are these Scriptures laid so near, and the connection made so strong, if one sentence refers to the Supreme Being, and the other to a person that is derived and dependent?

These arguments have swelled beyond my first design, but I could not baulk them. I bless God my

soul is in this cause, which is so dear, that I hope no reproaches will ever move me; and if I should suffer the loss of all things, Divine grace can teach me to despise them, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

5. Believing in Christ is drawing down further supplies of grace and holiness from him. "I am come," says he, "that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly; John x. 10; so that your advance in religion sometimes goes by the name of conversion; it is called Christ's being formed in you. For this the apostle travailed in birth over those who were his children before. The thing that he desired with so many throes and wishes was, that Christ might be formed in them; which would not be understood of their first religion, for that was begun already; but he speaks of the improvements they were to make in it as if it was a new conversion. When David begs to be restored to the use of his graces, he does it by a word that might signify the first implanting of them, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." Psal. li. 10. Thus was Christ to be formed in these people. Every communication that he made of himself to them was like beginning the work over again. We are still to be transformed by the renewing of our minds; we ought daily to put off the old man, and be renewed in the spirit of our minds. Now it shows us the necessity of a dependence upon him, that we do not only receive from him the principles of a Divine life, but it is he that gives it all the enlargement that it can have. Unto those that fear his name does the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings, that they may go forth and grow up as calves of the stall. Mal. iv. 2. From him we have the perfecting of the saints and the edifying of the body.

And what can this proclaim him to be, but a God? We can say it of none besides an infinite nature, "With thee is the fountain of life." Psal. xxxvi. 9. This was one of the noblest apprehensions that could be conveyed into the minds of men, and what the

apostle opens as superior to all the doctrines of idolatry, that in God we live, and move, and have our being; that it was He who made of one blood all nations of men that dwell upon the face of the earth; that we are his offspring. Acts xvii. 26. Now there is a greater life than this derived from our Saviour, that which is more glorious in itself, and more important to those that have it, as we are told by the evangelist, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." It led them to the knowledge of the truth, it breathed into them the principles of a heavenly joy; and this life is said to be *in him* as the fountain where it sprung and from whence it came. It is not enough to say, that this life was *by him* as a friend who took care to give it, in pursuance of a commission; no, he is infinitely more than a trustee, for it is *in him.* Thus the same writer tells us in his epistle, "This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that has the Son has life." John v. 11, 12.

Let us compare these accounts of a Redeemer with the sermon to the Athenians about the great God. The apostle Paul took it for granted, that he had no better argument for the worship of a Deity than this, that "he gives life, and breath, and all things." By doing that, he was distinguished from all creatures both in heaven and earth. This could never be affirmed of any but the Supreme Being. And can a natural life have no other author than a God, and shall that which is spiritual be produced by a deputy deity? No, "this is the true God, and eternal life," 1 John v. 20. When Christ tells us that we must abide in him, and that without him we can do nothing, John xv. 4, 5, he mentions greater obligations and a more intimate dependence than we can have for the life that we live in the flesh.

He is the head of the body, and from him all the members, deriving the nourishment that is ministered to them, increase with the increase of God, Col. ii. 19. This phrase tells us the author of the increase as well as the nature of it. For though the name of God in

a Hebraism very often signifies no more than what is great and noble, yet it is a mere fraud and shift to bring such an exposition into this place. Suppose we should use the same device in speaking of the righteousness of God, and the grace of God, what murdering work should we make in the chief articles of our religion? But as the righteousness of God is a righteousness that God brings in, and stands in opposition to that which is our own; and as the grace of God is a principle that God implants, and of which he is the author, so this increase of God is what he gives. He from whom it is derived can be no other than a God, and yet we grow up unto him in all things who is the head, even Christ, Eph. iv. 15. As in one place Christ is said to begin a good work in you, so in another you are expressly told, that he who has wrought you for the self same thing is God.

What creature could say, as our Lord did to the woman of Samaria, If thou hadst known who said unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water? John iv. 10. Though that was a metaphorical expression, yet what he says afterwards is open enough. "The water that I shall give shall be a well of water springing up to everlasting life." If all the angels in heaven cannot give wings to a fly, or breath to a worm; if it is purely the work of a God to quicken the dead; if he is our life, and the length of our days, is there any room to suppose that the concerns of a life more Divine and glorious will be lodged with a creature? And yet all the advance that a believer makes in holiness is ascribed to Jesus; as the apostle, who was both a minister and a witness of the Christian religion, says, "The life I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me," Gal. ii. 20. His faith was that by which he maintained this life; and Christ being the object of this faith, was the person from whom he had all supplies given him. It is only a God who holds our souls in a natural life; and what must he be who can answer all the cries and

demands of a spiritual life? who causes those that love him to inherit substance, and fills all their treasures? The eyes of all things wait on the Supreme Being, to be upheld by the word of his power. It is he that hears the young ravens when they cry; the lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. And does the believer seek the bread that endures to everlasting life from one that is less than a God? Is grace maintained by a lower friend than nature? Is our breath in the hands of God, for a life that is but a span? and can one, who by nature is no God, be sufficient for a life that is eternal? No; when you read of your being built up on your most holy faith, and that the body makes increase to the edifying of itself in love, Eph. iv. 16; though these blessings come from Christ, you may be sure that the builder and maker is no other than God.

One of the greatest notions that we can have of the Father, is that he has life in himself, and we are told in the same verse, that he has given to the Son to have life in himself; and as the Father raises up the dead, and quickens them, so the Son quickens whom he will, John v. 26. There is nothing in the expression of giving this to him, that can diminish the thing of having life in himself. It signifies as much in one part of the verse as it does in the other. Either he that has life in himself is God, or otherwise it gives us but a lower conception of the Father. It declares an independence on any superior. He that has one above him, cannot have life in himself: and therefore by giving it to him here, we must understand no more than his proclaiming that Christ should have it in his union to our nature, that he would have us to know the Son of man is no less than God. Creatures, as they are receivers and possessors of life, cannot be said to have it in themselves; for that is peculiar to an author, and we can apply it to no other than the great Preserver of men: and yet here it is affirmed of Christ, which proves that he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, because he upholds all things by the word

of his power, Heb. i. 2, 3. He has, more especially in the religious world, created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created.

6. Believing in Christ is regarding him as our comforter in every time of need. This is sometimes applied to the Father, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them who are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God," 2 Cor. i. 3, 4. Sometimes it is represented as the work of the Spirit; "I will pray the Father," said Christ, "and he will give you another Comforter, who shall abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth," John xiv. 16, 17. Hence we read of a joy in the Holy Ghost. We are sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Rom. xiv. 16; Eph. i. 13; and, as you have already heard, our Lord takes it to himself.

Now, whoever it is that can set the believer above his fears, and give him a peace and joy, does by that proclaim a Divine nature. It is God who comforts them that are cast down, 2 Cor. vii. 6. Elihu admires this power of a Deity, When he speaks quietness, who can give trouble?" Job xxxiv. 29; and David cannot be supposed to beg it from any other, Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. The Lord raises up them that are bowed down. He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds. This Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, Psal. li. 8; cxlvi. 8. 10; cxlvii. 3.

Now, upon all occasions, our Saviour tells the disciples, that he would not leave them comfortless. In the world they should have trouble, but in him they must have peace, John xiv. 18; xvi. 33. There was something in his way of dealing out this favour, that showed him to be God. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world gives, give I unto you." He is known to his people by these distributions; they that receive his kindness, are

able to distinguish it from all that creatures can do; for he has made his wonderful works to be remembered.

From this the apostle John argues all along for the support of Christians under the rage of enemies, and the treachery of apostates, when many antichrists had gone out into the world. He leads them to a sense, and an improvement of their union to Christ. Thus he pleads, "Now we are the sons of *God*, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but when he shall appear, we shall be like *him*, for we shall see him as he is;" Him, that is, the God whose sons we are. To this he adds, "Every man who hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as *he* is pure," i. e. the God of all purity, to whom they are related. And who this is you find afterwards, "Ye know that *he* was manifested to take away our sins." 1 John iii. 2, 3. 5. These words bring it to our Saviour, and agree to the language of my text, that "God was manifest in the flesh." So again, in the next chapter he joins these two together, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them," i. e. the false prophets who are gone out into the world; "for greater is *he* that is in you, than he that is in the world." He that is said to be in them is our blessed Saviour, who had overcome the world. His being *in them*, agrees with all the language of Scripture, "I in them, and thou in me," "Christ in you the hope of glory." John xvii. 23; Col. i. 27.

Now this is true of the Divine nature; for God dwells in us, and we in him. Certainly this phrase of a Being that dwells in men, ought not to be used without any distinction, and given out promiscuously both to God and a creature. David means no other than a Deity, when he says, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, *thy* comforts delight my soul." Psal. xciv. 19. And does the apostle derive comfort from any lower hands? No; these were comforts wherewith they were "comforted *of God;*" and yet in the very next verse he tells us, that "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, our consolation abound-

eth *by Christ.*" And afterwards saith, The people were his rejoicing, as he was theirs in the day of the Lord Jesus. 2 Cor. i. 3—5.

Our Saviour has the government upon his shoulder, and of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end. Isa. ix. 6, 7. He gave Saul his commission, with a promise that he would deliver him from the people and the gentiles, to whom he sent him. And as he met with a long experience of this protection, he tells Agrippa, "Having therefore obtained help from God, I continue to this day." Acts xxvi. 17. 22. The word *therefore* refers us to the former promise. It was *Christ* that told him, that he would deliver him: well, he had done so, and this the apostle calls an obtaining "help from God."—Christ appeared to him at Corinth, and gave him an assurance, "No man shall set on thee to hurt thee." And there is nothing in Paul's language that obliges us to exclude Christ from the account we have of his deliverance at sea. "There stood by me," says he, "the Angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve." All the angels are ministering spirits to our Lord, and *by him* sent forth to the heirs of salvation.

But the comforts that he gives to his people are of a more inward kind; and these can be no other than the work of a God. It is the joy of the Lord that must be our strength. It is He who, when the outward man decays, renews us in the inward man day by day. We always bear about with us the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifest in our body. That made them, when they were troubled on every side, not to be distressed, when they were perplexed, they were not in despair; because, say they, "We who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifest in our mortal flesh." Now this is more than a creature can do; for, as he tells us there, the excellency of the power was to be of God, and not of them. 2 Cor. iv. 8. 10, 11.

How could our Lord say to the disciples, "a little while, and ye shall not see me; and again a little

while, and ye shall see me?" John xvi. 16. In the former sentence, he plainly refers to their losing his body; they were to know Christ no more after the flesh; but the latter is understood of a Divine presence. And was this fit for any one to say but the Supreme Being? "Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?" How should he say, The world sees me no more, but ye see me, and because I live, ye shall live also? This is more than any of the saints can say. Does not this argue an omnipresence, that heaven is not only the place from whence we look for a Saviour to judge the world, but from whence we feel one? And how can it be said of any less than a God, that he went "far above all heavens, that he might fill all things?" Eph. iv. 10.

7. If we believe in Christ, we shall declare it by an obedience to him in all manner of conversation. "To me," saith the apostle, "to live is Christ." And is it not too much to have this said of a creature? The notion we have of religion is this, that a man lives his time in the flesh, not to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. The Lord made all things for himself; of him, and to him, and through him, are all things. And more especially in the nobler work of redemption he has declared himself to be the great end of the whole contrivance. We are to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved. None of us lives to himself, and no man dies to himself; but whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's, Eph. i. 6; Rom. xiv. 7, 8. Can there be any words that express so full a surrender as this? and must it be made to any besides the great God? and yet you see what Lord he means in the next words, "For to this end Christ both died and rose again, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of dead and living." Where can you find expressions of duty that are more significant? Nothing further can be said of our obedience to the Most High. The Apostle tells them, "Whether we are besides ourselves, it is to *God*,"

i. e. for his service; "or whether we be sober, it is for your cause," 2 Cor. v. 13. What God is it, that all their zeal is directed to? You will learn his meaning from the next words that come in as an argument; For the love of *Christ* constrains us, who died for all, that they who live should not live unto themselves, but to *Him* that died for them and rose again. What David may be supposed to say to the Father, these apostles say to the Son; "Truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant," Psal. cxvi. 16. And can the profession be directed to any but the same infinite Nature? One shall say I am the Lord's, and another shall subscribe with his hand to the Lord. Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of Hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God, Isa. xliv. 5, 6.

8. They that believe in Christ give him a religious worship: and as that is the greatest thing we can do in this world, so let it not be said that we worship we know not what. Heaven and earth shall pass away before one tittle of the law does, and especially that in the first and second commandments: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me;" it is no matter for a creature's having the name of a god. "Thou shalt not make to thee any likeness of any thing in heaven above, or in the earth beneath; thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them;" not only to the likeness that thou makest of them, for that must be a stupid idolatry indeed; but there is none in heaven above, before whom thou must bow down and worship; "for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God."

If the gospel had not represented Christ as a God, I should never have dared to get over the prohibition of this law. He himself gives no answer but this to Satan, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." So that he refuses to fall down before him, not merely because he is a devil, but because he is a creature. And what he says to him, would have been as proper to the brightest angel in heaven. The angel forbade

John to do it upon this very ground, "Worship thou God." No excellency of nature, no engagement of kindness, can make any person the object of our devotion. When we are called to fall down and worship, it is "before the Lord our Maker." And upon no other consideration could we read of worshipping the Son. The angels of God are charged to worship him; and the reason is plain, because by him were all things created, whether they be in heaven or on earth; thrones, principalities, dominions and powers, all are created by him and for him, Heb. i. 6; Col. i. 16. The world below is called to do it, because "the world was made by him;" his people to do it, because he is the Author and Finisher of their faith, John i. 10; Heb. xii. 2. The church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven, fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and before the Lamb, because they are his house, and he that has built them is God, Heb. iii. 4.

The Scripture has put a great value upon your doing any thing in the name of God. All people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever, Mic. iv. 5. Christ uses the same language in a gracious promise. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." That phrase *in my name* is used about the greatest solemnities in religion. This, I think, is too much for a creature, according to that profession of the Church, Other lords besides thee have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee, Isa. xxvi. 8. 13. But not to force the word beyond the necessary meaning, who could make such a promise, That where two or three are met together, there am I in the midst of them? Here observe two things:

First, This comes in as the reason of what he had told them before; that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in hea-

ven, for I am in the midst of them. Does not this prove that he and the Father are one? Why is his being in the midst of them an argument that the Father will hear them? But besides that,

Secondly, he here talks in the language of a God. He does not say I will come down to them, I will bow the heavens, and come down; no, but *I am* in the midst of them, antecedent to their desire. It is true, these words do not mention an omnipresence, because his being among them signifies more than his being with the wicked; but they suppose it. How can it be true that he should be present with so many thousands of their assemblies? or you may call them conventicles if you please; a good thing is never the worse for a hateful word. How shall he make good his promise to the vast numbers that are met together in his name, if it was not He of whom David saith, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or flee from thy presence?" Psal. cxxxix. 7. He is called indeed "the branch of the Lord," that should be "beautiful and glorious," and we read of "the fruit of the earth that shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel," Isa. iv. 2. This supposes his taking upon him the human nature; but nothing less than a Divine nature can make good what we read afterwards, that "the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion," let there be never so many thousands of them, "and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night;" that is, he will be as actually and effectually present with every church under the New Testament, as he was with the church in the wilderness. And how is this possible, if his name was not excellent in all the earth, and his glory above the heavens?

It is in vain for any to deny the truth of his being among us, because we cannot explain it. Nothing has more the air of darkness and arrogance, than to object, against the reality of a thing, the difficulty there is in the manner of it. Thus the doctrine of the Trinity is used. The men that oppose it, do not demand of you a proof, but an explanation, and ima-

gine with contempt enough, that because you are at a loss in the one, so you must be in the other. The presence of Christ with his assemblies is one of those mysterious certainties that we are to believe, though we cannot unfold the way of it.

I need not lead you into divinity for several matters which have the greatest evidence that they are so, and yet the greatest obscurity how they come to be so. Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds? Canst thou tell how thy garments are warm when he quiets the earth with his south wind? Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea, or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven, or canst thou set the dominion thereof upon the earth? Job xxxvii. 16, 17; xxxviii. 16. 33; and yet, can you deny these things? "Thou knowest not the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child;" and yet thou must be a very awkward creature to say there is no such thing. But so it is, that persons who are puzzled with a worm, are impatient to be told that they cannot know a God!

9. Believing in Christ is trusting him for a future protection, to carry us through all our dangers. The Lord shall preserve us from every evil work, and bring us to his heavenly kingdom, 2 Tim. iv. 18. And who is this Lord? I answer, Ye are preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. He that loved the church, and gave himself for it, is to present it to himself, as a holy church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, Jude 1; Eph. v. 27. David expected this from no other than God. Thou wilt guide me by thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to thy glory. And to show that there was but one who could do this, he adds, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth whom I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart fails; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." We commit the keeping of our souls to a faithful Creator, 1 Pet. iv. ult.

And yet the apostle directs our hopes to the great

Redeemer: "We look for the mercy of the Lord Jesus to eternal life," Jude 21. And having spoken of that, he concludes with this doxology: "Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, Amen." His ability to keep us from falling is what the Scripture has abundantly testified. "He is able to save to the uttermost." His presenting us before his own glory agrees to what is said of him in several other places, Behold I, and the children whom God has given me, Heb. ii. 13. And the apostle calls him that does it, by the name of the only wise God our Saviour. He represents these things as fit for none but a God to do; and, therefore, as they belong to Christ, he is the only wise God our Saviour, to whom be glory for ever, Amen.

10. Believing in Christ Jesus is *looking* to him as the finisher of our faith, who will give a completeness to his own work. I choose to express this great act of the soul upon a death-bed, in the language that God has clothed it with; and it agrees with all those phrases by which good people have delivered their notions of a true gospel faith. Thus in the Old Testament, believing in Christ was for all the ends of the earth to *look* to him and be saved. And the conversion of the Jews is laid down in these terms: "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced." Isa. xlv. 22; Zech. xii. 10.

It is true, we read of an opposition between faith and sight; the former, by which we walk, gives us the limitations we are under in this world, and the latter opens out the liberty and glory of the next. But yet faith has in it the nature of vision, though it is here distinguished from it. It is said of those that received Christ, which is explained by their believing in his name, that they beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. John i. 12. 14. The faith of Moses is delivered to us in these words: "He endured as seeing him who is invisible." Heb.

xi. 27. So that, you observe this is the language both of the Old and New Testament; and what they are used to, who build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Though believing is distinguished from seeing, yet it is very often expressed by it. To which end we read, that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up," John iii. 14, that, as by looking at the one, so by believing in the other, they might find a healing virtue. "They looked to him, and were lightened." "Him has God set forth to be a propitiation for our sins." Psal. xxxiv. 5. Rom. iii. 25. The first act of our faith is a closing with that call, "I said, Behold me, behold me." And the last look we take, is to One who will give the great perfection to his own image, and present us without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, before his glory, with exceeding joy. Now, it is to Jesus that we thus look, as "the Author and Finisher of our faith." We consider the cloud of witnesses with which we are encircled and encompassed about, as so many examples; but our eyes are upon *him* as the efficient of what we are and what we shall be.

And who can this be but the Most High God? The Scripture has directed us to no other than an Almighty Agent, either for the working of faith in us, or carrying it on with power, or raising it to felicity and vision. We read of the exceeding greatness of his power towards them that believe. David says, The Lord will perfect that which concerns me, and not forsake the work of his own hands, because his mercy endures for ever. Psal. cxxxviii. ult. The apostle says in the most positive terms, He that has wrought us for the self-same thing is God. He that establisheth us in Christ, and has anointed us, is God, who has also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. It is God who fulfils in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power. 2 Cor. v. 5; i. 22, 23; 2 Thes. i. 11. They that believe in Christ, are born of God; and he who has begun this good work, will perform it to the day of Christ Jesus. "All things are of God, who has

reconciled us to himself;" that is, all those things that make us new creatures. Now, what is performing the thing that he has begun, but that He will be the Finisher, who has been the Author of our faith? that he will fulfil the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him?

Christ is the governor both of grace and nature; he has the keys of death, and of the invisible state. It is by the turn of his hand that we are let out of one world into another; and it is also by him, that the better life, which is here begun, rises into that life that was its pattern, and will be its end. And is not this too much for a creature to do? Can a believer have his last confidence in one who is not God, and go out of the world under the hazard and appearance of idolatry? David durst trust himself with none but an infinite Being, "Into thy hands do I commit my spirit, Lord God of truth, for thou hast redeemed me." This is the employment of faith, in which every good man is to follow him. They are to die in that way, who die in the Lord; for they all die in faith. And I can never think that a true believer will stop at any thing short of what they depended on; our faith and hope are to be in a God, as well as David's. We have none in heaven but God; it is he who made with the sweet psalmist of Israel a new and everlasting covenant, which was all his salvation. Stephen's faith was thus employed: he called on God, saying, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit."

There are two answers given to the argument that arises out of this Scripture. First, That the word God is not in the original, but supplied by our translators; and their doing so has been insulted as a trick or a fraud. But the persons, who can be triumphant upon that observation, show they are very ready for it; and I must tell them it is a little too soon for people to boast at the girding on of the harness. Sporting and making a wide mouth, and drawing out the tongue, are given as a mark to know the children of

transgression, and the seed of falsehood, Isa. lvii. 4. That the word was thrown in by our translators, is plain enough; but apparently without any design to steal upon us the doctrine of Christ's Divinity; for this truth receives no advantage at all from that reading, but stands in fuller force, and in a better light without it. Because it is evident, that Stephen, who saw heaven opened, and the glory of God, and Jesus at the right hand of God, found it was now his duty to commend a departing soul to one who could take care of it; and whoever this was, he called upon him. His last prayer and recumbence was on him; for the word signifies both these. He has nothing further to say about himself, than to beg that the person he spoke to would receive his spirit.

Now the question is, whether his faith was at this time dealing with the same that David's did? or whether the Jewish religion taught people to think that none but the Supreme God was fit to be their friend in a dying hour, but Christianity has made us dependent on one who is dependent himself? It is but a sorry compliment to the gospel, to suppose that it makes that to be the work of a creature, of which none but God is capable. They of old used to deal with the principal agent, and are we to believe in a deputy? The accusation had been true, that Stephen spake blasphemous words against Moses and against God, if he taught people such a dependence upon Christ, as all good men used to have upon a faithful Creator. Strike the word God from this text, and read it thus, that "they stoned Stephen, calling upon, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and does it not appear that the person he called upon was Jesus, and the petition that he made to him was, that he would receive his spirit? the best thing that he could do, and the last resignation that he could make. This agrees to the promise that our Saviour left with his disciples, "I will come again, and *receive you* to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." Can we think that he who said this was any less than the benefactor upon whom the psalmist had his whole

dependence? "Thou wilt guide me by thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory." Are there two of these friends; and is one of them not a God? Thus he revealed himself to his people, and thus they received him. "The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show to his servants the things that must shortly be done." And who is he? "I Jesus have sent my angel to testify to you. He that testifies these things says, Surely I come quickly." We see of whom they understood it by their answer, "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus," Rev. xxii. 6. 16. 20.

When God spake at sundry times, and in divers manners, by types, prophecies, visions, voices, miracles, and signs, he still led up the people through those things to himself. The faith of men did not centre in the figure or the prophet, but in Him that appointed them. And does he speak in these last days by his Son, to drop his own name, that we should have less concern with a God now, than they had formerly? and yet this is plainly the case, if Christ and the Father are not one. But that is a doctrine which he has proclaimed. "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father; and henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me doeth the works. Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very works' sake." John xiv. 7. 10, 11.

Moses was a faithful servant to the Most High; he never stood as a screen between the people and their God, but still directed them higher and further; and it is very unhappy that though Christ was more furnished than he, yet by his coming into the world, our faith has less to do with a God than theirs had; which it certainly must have, if we do not see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. David had a great opinion of Moses; but he durst not say to him, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit." No;

there are two reasons for this surrender to God, that can never be applied to a creature. 1st. That he had "redeemed" it; and certainly Stephen meant no less when he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." He looked upon him to be the holy One of Israel, and his Redeemer. 2dly. David calls him the "God of truth," which may either be understood of his nature, that he is the true God, in opposition to idols, or of his covenant, that this is "ordered in all things, and sure."

Now, both these reasons are equally good in the petition of Stephen. In calling upon Jesus, he had to do with him who is "full of grace and truth," "the way, the truth, and the life;" "the Amen, the faithful and true witness." That holy and just One, as he is called, and by whom grace and truth came to the world, who came to bear witness to the truth, and to whom it is said in the praises of heaven, "Just and true are all thy ways, thou King of Saints." Thus we are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. Rev. xv. 3; Eph. ii. 20.

Secondly, Another answer to this expression of the martyr's faith, is what I have met with in a late book, where the author is very full of a profession, that he is *Christianus*, but not *Christicola;* a Christian, but not a worshipper of Christ. He says, the case of Stephen was extraordinary; that he had such a vision as none can expect, and that therefore he is no more an example to us, than Paul was in his being caught up to the third heavens. This is a mighty thought, indeed, and may be numbered rather among the "perverse" than the cunning "disputings of men of corrupt minds, who are destitute of the truth." That his discoveries were unusual I grant, but his sentence is no other than the last profession of every believer. They are all "looking to Jesus," as the Finisher of their faith. What he said was either right or wrong. If it was right for him to put his soul into the hands of Jesus, I must tell you, it is impossible he should do any more to the great God, who has said so plainly, My son, give me thy heart? If it was wrong, and

stands not for your example, but your caution, I think the favour of God to his martyrs has rather proved a snare than a benefit to the church. If the first man who ever suffered for the Christian religion made such an unhappy use of the testimony that was given him from above, as to bequeath that to a creature which is the most noble present that can be made to a God, we must not say that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed," but rather the stain and the scandal "of the church."

But when he said it, he was full of the Holy Ghost, whose office it was not to delude, but to guide them into all truth; Acts vii. 55; John xvi. 13. Now, here is the choice that is left us, either to condemn Stephen for an idolater, or this author for an infidel; either the one made a prostitute of his conscience, or the other has done it of his reason. And though I hope I shall ever admire charity as the glory of my religion, yet I must profess I have a greater esteem for that martyr, than I have for such writers, who confess themselves to be out of the number of those that "in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. i. 2. This is like to be the case of every one of us in a little time. Die we must; and as long as nature and grace are capable of acting, we shall be putting ourselves into some hands or other. The Scripture has directed us by many a precept, as well as this noble example, thus to look unto Jesus; which is more than I shall dare to do, if I do not think him to be a God. "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul." Psal. xxv. 1. 'Whenever my soul used this language, I knew in whom I have believed, and was persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to him against that day. I always understood it of Christ. It is to him the consignments have been made many a time; and therefore, as soon as ever I come to find that he is no God, my religion will be all a drawback, a fetching of things out of his hand.' Whatever value I may have for him, (as I owe a great deal to the angels who are below him,) yet my faith and hope must be in a God;

and more especially in the last and greatest concern that I can have.

I cannot dismiss this head, though I have been a long while upon it, without telling you a story that has some relation to it. A very good friend and most intimate acquaintance, told me several years ago what scruples he had about the Divinity of Christ. I could not but observe in the frequent conversations I had with him, that he was far from the length that some have arrived at, to have no pleasure in the truth, but a pleasure in unrighteousness. I could see the objections gave him a great deal of pain, and he strove to reconcile the Arian and Socinian doctrine with what is opposite to them. I remember I once plied him with this particular instance of the martyr Stephen, and told him how dreadful it would be in a dying hour for a man not to know where to look, or upon whom to have a dependence as the last friend of his soul: and that if the Scripture directs my faith only to Jesus, and reason tells me he is not God, I shall take believing in that case to be a disconsolate venture. I desired him not to strive against inward evidence, or treat the mysteries of religion as if he was sure they were either a falsehood, or the craft of designing men. And I the rather did this, because he had been for some time in a languishing state of health. After these things, he more than once told me, how earnestly he had desired that God would not let him go out of the world uncertain about that matter. And though he had continued long ill, yet his death was so far sudden, that a few moments before, he declared himself something better than he had been for several weeks, and so had just time and strength enough to say no more than these words, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Thus have I gone through both the explanation of the text, and the argument that it gives us, that He who is "believed on in the world," is no other than the Most High God. I am now to take this doctrine in another view.

III. As it is a MYSTERY. Indeed we have lived to see and hear this very name treated as if it was

only a jest; and that by mystery you are to understand either a contradiction or an imposture. Thus are high thoughts exalting themselves against the knowledge of the Son of God. I am sure in using the phrase we do not depart from the words of Scripture. There we often have it; and certainly the Holy Spirit did not scatter it about in his book, to have it bantered and exposed in ours. Such profaneness will end in universal trembling; it makes those tremble now who are serious; and it will do the same in those that are not so. "Therefore be not mockers, lest your bands be made strong." For my part, I shall consider it in the way that my text has presented it. And you will find that believing on Christ in the world is a Mystery, if you do but attend to these two things. 1. The nature of the work. 2. The nature of the place: that there should be any believing at all, and that it should be in the world.

1. Believing itself is a mystery; as it is acting without the direction of sense and reason, and very often against them; and therefore in opposition to the example and practice of others. So that it must proceed from something that we feel only in ourselves.

(1.) Believing is acting without the direction of sense and reason: it is depending upon what we do not see, and admiring what we cannot understand. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." We look at the things that are not seen, which are eternal. Whom having not seen, ye love; and in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with a joy unspeakable, and full of glory. John iii. 6. 2 Cor. iv. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 8. And is notth is wonderful to those whose souls get no further than their bodies, who "mind earthly things?" Their great inquiry is, "who will show us any good?" They walk in the sight of their eyes; their portion, business and hearts, are in this life; they know nothing what believing is; and persons who are thus distinguished from them, make an unaccountable figure in their opinion. The Lord of Hosts, whom believers sanctify in their hearts,

is for a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence; and both he and the children whom God has given him are for signs and for wonders in Israel. Isaiah viii. 13, 14. 18.

(2.) Believing is oftentimes acting against these two principles, by which we are to be conducted in other things. We are called to believe what reason cannot explain, and to perform what sense will abhor. By honor and dishonour, by evil report and good report; as dying, chastened, sorrowful, poor, and having nothing. 2 Cor. vi. 8, 9. I know that this very description of faith makes it the contempt of the world; but it is never the worse for that: a minister is to be patient to all men; but it is carrying the complaisance a great deal too far, if they who are enemies to the gospel of Christ can persuade him either to give it up or keep it in. The apostle begged that utterance might be given him, that he might open his mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which he was an ambassador in bonds, that therein he might speak boldly as he ought to speak. Eph. vi. 19, 20.

I look upon human reason to be no more a judge of doctrine than it is of practice. It is employed indeed about the rule, it receives the evidence upon which I believe. This is revelation; but it has nothing to do to determine about the matters revealed. We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given us of God. The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. ii. 12. 14.

I will give you an instance of this in duty. Abraham's reason told him, that the command to offer his son Isaac came from God; that it was truly the Lord who tempted him, and said those cutting things that led him into an unheard of practice; but he never inquired of reason whether he should obey or no. He never measured this command by the law of na-

ture, which obliged him to shed no blood, and to take care of his child; or even by the promise of the covenant, that "in Isaac shall thy seed be called." I am sure that precept, "Go take thy son, thy only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him for a burnt-offering," is as unintelligible, and liable to as many objections, as that text can be, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one," 1 John v. 7. Our reason may with equal justice call this nonsense, and endeavour to prove it spurious, and go about hunting into copies with as much speed as a wild ass runs in the wilderness; for indeed both these works are but snuffing up the wind at pleasure.

Let not any say, God cannot be supposed to tell me, that three are one by revelation, because he has before-hand told me, that three cannot be one in nature; and I must not imagine that he gives me a new light to contradict the old one. Abraham's love to his son, and his abstaining from shedding innocent blood, was as much rooted in nature, and established by all the principles of religion, as that one cannot be three. He was as sure of those practical maxims, as we are of this mysterious notion. Had all the angels in heaven given him that command about Isaac, and sent him to Moriah upon so dreadful an errand, you may be sure he would have stuck by the principles that God had implanted already, of justice to human nature, and affection to his child, and especially a regard to the promise, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," and not a hair of his head must have perished.

No more should we ever say that three are one, or that the just dies for the unjust, or that the body shall rise incorruptible, or that a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son, or that God could be manifest in the flesh. These things cannot be explained by reason; they are spiritually discerned, and therefore not to be received but upon report; and upon no report but that of a God, who cannot lie. If he has said them they must be, though we are at a loss to conceive how they can be. So it was with Abraham: he had no more

to do than to inquire whether this command came from God or no; and when that difficulty is over his reason is under a bar. The objections that would have prevailed, had the exhortation been given by a creature, are not allowed to stir, or move a tongue. He knew the promise would hold, he knew the command must be answered, he knew the one was destructive of the other; but he leaves that to God. His faith was to ask no questions, but to believe the good old way, in hope and against hope, because it depended upon him who raises the dead, and calls the things that are not, as though they were.

Now, we go no greater lengths in receiving a doctrine that we cannot understand, than in doing a duty that we cannot account for. Do not say that God will not put you upon believing against reason; you see may put you upon acting against it. What principle of nature is more early, more internal and perpetual with us, than that of self-preservation? and therefore what can be more abominable than a religion that destroys it? and yet it is notorious that this is the great demand of Christianity. "If any man," says our Lord, "hate not his own life, he cannot be my disciple." It is observed of some of his people, that they "loved not their lives unto the death." He has hung a dreadful punishment over the contrary disposition. "He that saveth his life shall lose it." It is as reasonable to embrace a mystery as a martyrdom; they are both unaccountable. Human reason is laid aside, or plainly over-ruled in each of them, and shows that God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. Therefore,

(3.) Believing is acting in opposition to the practice and example of others; and it is no easy matter to get thus high. Nay, perhaps your discouragement will arise from men of great names, from particular friends, from such as "call themselves of the holy city." Your faith will be loaded with all the scandalous insinuations of enthusiasm, persecution, conceit, and folly. Arguments against you will be said to rise from a zeal for liberty, the honour of the

Christian religion, and a prospect of making it go down with infidels. Some profess to believe the doctrine of the gospel, and take a Christian name only as they took a civil one, because they found it where they were born; these will not endure the trial. In a day of temptation mere forms of speaking are what they may be driven from; and if they make a creed, which is but the language of faith, to be the ground of it, it will never do. These, rather than be the jest of an adversary, will be their captives, and prove treacherous to the cause which they cannot maintain; and when they leave you, it will be with the destruction of all modesty, humility, and tenderness. Though they cannot lift up their heads, they will lift up their heels against you.

Now, is it not a wonder, when the roads are so lined and guarded, that there is any believing in the world? and yet faith is of the operation of God. As men do not plant it, so men shall not root it up. Christ has always raised up some who have a concern for those doctrines which the world reckons a trifle, and many professors have dropped as an error. There is a principle that carries us through all the snares of friendship, and all the terrors of shame; that makes us know the friendship of the world to be enmity with God, and sets things out to our choice, in this fair distinction, that the friend of the world is the enemy of God. James iv. 4.

(4.) This proceeds from something within ourselves. We have several arguments for the doctrine, that may be pleaded with others; as a clear revelation, the comparing spiritual things with spiritual, the known sense of words, the frequent testimony of Scripture; and some of a lower nature, the concurrence of God's people in all ages; I do not only mean those who were witnesses in a council, but those who were so at a stake. These, I say, are considerations that will have their weight with such as are seeking after the truth. But the principle of believing is incommunicable, and cannot be conveyed in an argument. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but

by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. xii. 3. Peter and the rest of the apostles had much evidence of our Lord's being the Son of God from his doctrine, his miracles, and his conformity to all the prophetical characters; and yet flesh and blood did not reveal this to them, but our Father who is in heaven. Saul had heard great reasonings for the Christian religion at the trial and the death of Stephen; but that faith and love which he found at last, came along with the exceeding abundant grace of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. 1 Tim. i. 14.

2. To what is said of believing in general, we may add the circumstance of place where men are to look for it, which leads us further into the mystery. It is a wonder there should be any such principle as faith, but it is more so that Christ is believed on *in the world*, in this world, and not in heaven; in a world where he had been refused; where the greatest evidence had proved in vain; where he was no longer to appear; where people were possessed with prejudice against him; which was under the power of his most obstinate enemy; and where nothing was to be got by it.

(1.) You will observe the mystery of believing in Christ, if you regard it as a thing to be met with in this world, and not in heaven. Had it been said of him, now that he is received up into glory, that the vast multitudes who hear his voice admire his person, we could easily come into the report, because there he is revealed with a brightness unconfined. There is no vail upon his face, no limitation to their sight. "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are known." And this is so much above our experience here, that he is supposed to be in a sort of obscurity, till that time comes. That is the revelation of Jesus Christ. He who is our life shall appear, 1 Pet. i. 13; Col. iii. 4. He is now our life, we have a life that is hid with Christ in God; but in all the present manifestations of him, there is the hiding of his power. His appearing is always spoken of as a thing that is future, and be-

longs to the felicities of another state. It is said of them that are before the throne of God, that they see his face, and his name is in their foreheads, Rev. xxii. 4. The will of Christ was, that his people should be with him, where they are to behold his glory, John xvii. 24. There the disguise is off both from him and them, and no wonder that in broad daylight they should "see the King in his beauty," because they are got into the land which to us is "afar off." There is no danger that any of those above should be offended in him. The angels that proclaim his perfections, and the saints that live upon his merit, have not one unbeliever to say any thing against them; but the whole assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, ascribe honour, and glory, and salvation, and power, to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever. They are got up to the fountain of life, to the spring-head where life runs clear, and full, and eternal; and so in his light they see light. They see him as he is. He appears to them, as he appears to himself, in the brightness of his person, and the express declaration of his glory. They are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and He that sits upon the throne dwells among them, Rev. vii. 15.

But the mystery is, that he is believed on in a world where all this is hid; that he has a people, who having not seen him, love him, and who, though now they see him not, yet believing in him, rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory. 1 Pet. i. 6. This is more than Thomas would do. He insisted upon external evidence as the condition and guide of his faith, "Except I see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe;" and perhaps this is what he was led into by the account that the other disciples gave of an interview in his absence, that he showed them his hands and his side. All this advantage they have in heaven, for he is in the midst of the throne as a Lamb that had been slain. He is clothed with a vesture dipped in blood.

Rev. v. 6; xix. 13. Our Saviour, who pitied their frame, condescended to one who was so weak in the faith, and therefore saith to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing." But he closes the conversation with that remark, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; but blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believe."

Now what is it for them to believe? What is that act of the soul which goes by this title? You will be able to answer the question by comparing the two parts of this story. "These things are written, that ye might believe, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life in his name." John xx. 31. I take the faith that is here described to be of the same nature and extent with that which Thomas had before professed in those words, "My Lord and my God." Believing him to be the Christ the Son of God, and believing that you may have life in his name, is believing him to be your Lord and your God. As your Lord he is the Christ, and as your God he is the author of that life that you are to have in his name. Do not put it, as some people strive to do, upon the confusion that Thomas was in, and that the words signify not his sentiments but his surprise; for such exclamations and profane interjections are what the Scripture would teach us rather to abhor than to imitate. This was the language of a believer, and not of an affrighted man, and it is in vain to divert the force of the argument by another interpretation, viz. that Thomas declared *Christ* to be his Lord, and the *Father* to be his God. This is against all the laws of reading; it is making any thing of every thing; and at that rate there is not a sentence in the Bible that comes within a determinate meaning. It is plain our Saviour calls this the language of Thomas's faith, and of a faith in him. He had been faithless before, not in the Father, for that was not the question, but in the reality of Christ's resurrection; and what he calls believing, was the

root of that good profession, "My Lord and my God."

And such a faith was to prevail, through the preaching of the gospel, among those that had never seen what Thomas did. For it is remarkable, that his faith went beyond the evidence. All that he could see in his hands and his side, proved no more than that he was that very man who had suffered upon the cross, and that the same body was risen indeed, that had been crucified and slain. But when he is sure of that, he speaks of him not merely as one dead and alive again, but as the same that he always took him for, his Lord and his God. The wounds in his side, the prints of nails and spears, are no marks of a God; it had been blasphemy to give him the title upon that account; these proved no more than a human nature; but you see the office of a true faith: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. x. 9. This is not to be struck off from a regard to his Deity; for Thomas, who questioned his resurrection, is no sooner convinced of that, but he declares his opinion of the other, that he was his Lord and his God. Thus the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. The earth is *this* Lord's, and the fulness thereof. Rev. xi. 15; Psal. xxiv. 1.

(2.) It is mysterious that he is believed on in a world where he had been refused. When the Son of man came, he found little or no faith in the earth. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." He came to his own and his own received him not. This was needful on several accounts, and an honour to God's justice, that the Jews who had killed the prophets and stoned those who were sent unto them, should fill up the measure of their iniquity; upon this account their house was left unto them desolate. Nor is this proceeding void of a regard to his mercy; for by their fall, salvation is come unto the gentiles; the middle

wall of partition, which had continued so long between the one and the other, was to be broken down at his death, as the veil of the temple was at that time rent asunder. And indeed the project of God's wisdom, the design of his mercy to mankind in general, made it needful that a Saviour should not be known. "For had the princes of this world known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;" and without the shedding of his blood there could be no remission. The apostle gave that soft account of it to the Jews, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did your rulers; but those things which God before had shown by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ should suffer, he has so fulfilled." We might from a flood of Scripture arguments, prove, that Christ "must needs have suffered and enter into his glory." Luke xxiv. 46.

But I am now to consider the wonder that arises out of the case, that after such a usage he should ever have a people to receive him. How strangely are the parts of the xxiid Psalm put together! At the beginning he complains of God's forsaking him, and being so far from the words of his roaring; that his enemies had acted like greedy dogs, given him vinegar to drink, and gaped upon him with their mouths as a ravening and a roaring lion, which describes with a great deal of propriety the very manner of his sufferings so many ages after. And yet when all this is over, the kingdom shall be the Lord's; this Lord, who before was a worm and no man. Nothing after that is said of him, but what shows him to be a God. He is to be the Governor among the nations, not merely by the force and ways of Providence, but a seed shall serve him, and be accounted to the Lord for a generation; they shall arise and declare his righteousness to a people that shall be born, that the Lord has done this, i. e. his name, and the righteousness that he has brought in, shall be handed down through all ages. As they that are gone down to the dust have hoped for his truth, so they who are not yet come out of the womb shall be instructed to do

the same. His glory is to run parallel with time. He will have a church as long as he has a world.

Who could have expected this after he was despised and rejected of men? We usually say at the blasting of a new project, that it is nipt in the bud, the very blossom goes up as dust. To speak in the language that God himself has taught us, he had made several experiments, and all in vain. He is compared to a king, who sent out many servants to his subjects; some they stoned, others they killed, and all of them they refused. He has but one way more. I will send them my well beloved Son; when they see him, they will reverence him. He speaks there after the manner of men; all the reason in the world would give it that they should do so; but instead of that they cry out, "This is the heir, come let us kill him."

Now, after such a treatment, might he not have said, As I can send no better than my Son, I will send no more? And yet in that world where he was so little known, that they despised him, hated him, and killed him, there is he to be admired. Kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him; he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba, though he died so poor and necessitous: prayer shall be made for him continually, and daily he shall be praised; his name shall endure for ever, his name shall continue as long as the sun, men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed, Psal. lxxii. 11. 15. 17. He who was a servant of rulers, whom men despised and abhorred, was to sprinkle many nations. His doctrine would not conquer like thunder, but like rain. Kings were to shut their mouths at him: he that had been the reproach of men was to become the desire of all nations; and he that poured out his soul unto death was to have a portion with the great, and divide the spoil with the strong, Isa. xlix. 7; lii. ult; liii. ult.

Little did the Jews imagine that their hour was his hour, when the Son of man should be glorified; and that the power of darkness should prove the womb of the morning, John xiii. 31; Psal. cx. 3. They did

not understand, and could not believe the propriety of that comparison, that his interest would be like a grain of wheat thrown into the ground. Whilst it was entire, it abode alone, but by dying it was to be multiplied. This the apostle tells them. It was needful that the word of God should be first preached unto you; but seeing ye put it far from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo! we turn to the gentiles." And he speaks with assurance upon another occasion, "The salvation of God is sent to the gentiles, and they will hear it." Agreeable to which, a prophetic rapture is put into the mouth of Christ, "Thus saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the gentiles, and thou shalt be my salvation to the ends of the earth," Isa. xlix. 5, 6.

(3.) To this you may add another consideration, which heightens the wonder, that he is believed on in a world where the greatest evidence has already proved in vain. What he had seen and heard, he testified, and no man received his testimony. If we are to judge of things by the gross reasoning of mankind, the Jews had a thousand times more to make them Christians than we have. Our Lord was among the blameless, by their own confession, a Lamb without blemish, and without spot; whereas the gospel is preached to you by sinners; we have this treasure in earthen vessels, made of clay and tinged with guilt; and yet our ministry succeeds more than his, in accomplishment of that promise, "He that believeth on me, shall do the things that I do, yea greater things than I do shall he do, because I go to my Father," John xiv. 12. Again, he spake as never man did; his enemies wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; as no guile, so no error ever came from his lips: but your conversion is by the means

of such as are but of yesterday, and know nothing. They who know but in part, must prophesy in part.

And chiefly you may observe, the miracles that he wrought were in a way that never any person ought to pretend to, I mean at his own pleasure. He had it always in his power to ruffle nature and surprise the world, and he still did it in a testimony to himself, which was going higher than ever Moses did, or any creature ought to do. Moses told them, he would give them a sign that the Lord had sent him; but the works that Christ refers to, are a proof that he is in the Father, and the Father in him. John xiv. 10. They were arguments to prove more than a Divine commission; he pleads from them such a union as it would have been profane for him to speak of if he was not God. How much of this evidence was thrown away? As he says, "I have done among them such works as no other man did, yet they have hated both me and my Father." John xv. 24. Now, could it ever be expected, that things should mend when miracles ceased? Was it not in vain to hope that an effusion of the Spirit would convince those whom the resurrection of Lazarus had left impenitent? I do not look upon this wonder to be greater than the other; but as an argument of that power that our Saviour had above, he sent the Spirit upon his apostles for an evidence, and the Spirit upon his enemies for a conviction. "We are witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." Acts v. 32.

Though there were so few in his own nation that had any regard to him, and they had lately in an outrage wished his blood upon themselves and their children, yet we read of three thousand converted at one sermon; to let us see that the success of the gospel does not arise from a virtue in the person who delivers it, but from the blessing which God is pleased to convey by it. The Jews saw no form or comeliness in him, that they should desire him. He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, they hid their faces from him; and yet he

was fairer than the sons of men, his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. Isa. liii. 2, 3; Psal. xlv. 2; Cant. v. 15.

(4.) He is thus believed on in the world where he appears no longer. If he had so little influence when he was here, what can be expected from the distance of heaven? Now that we are to know him no more after the flesh, God has closed our hopes of an intercourse with him in his glorified state. The stories that the Papists tell upon this head deserve to be laughed at as ridiculous, and abhorred as profane; and yet, though he is no more with us in person, I mean in his body, we find the truth of that promise, "I am with you always, to the end of the world. Amen." Mat. xxviii. 20.

They that deny his Deity have also the rancour to slander his love; and as they had rather be without a happiness than allow him to give it, they take pains to empty these words of the kind assurance they are so full of, and tell us, that the promise signifies no more than a presence with his disciples as long as they lived; that the end of the world was the end of that age. But what?—Does the possession of all power in heaven and earth, with which he introduced this promise, reach no further than the lives of these apostles? Was the duty of "discipling all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and teaching them to observe all things that he had commanded," limited to them in person? Was the gospel no more than so much apostolical breath, that went forth when they returned to their dust? Yes, surely, they were to be enlarged according to their rule abundantly; to preach the gospel in the most distant regions. 2 Cor. x. 15, 16.

And if he was present with them, is he not capable of being so with us? The argument which they use to prove he is not present with us, is, that he is now in heaven: so he was a long while after he parted with *them*. They were witnesses of the sufferings of Christ, and partakers of the glory that should be revealed. 1 Pet. v. 1. They served him many years;

and if being in heaven destroyed his presence with a people on earth, the words of Christ must not be understood of the end of the apostles' lives, but the end of his own: and so here is a promise for the present time, I am *always* with you, that is, I am so *now*, and the word *always* must comprehend no more than a few days. These men of Galilee saw him go up to heaven, a cloud received him out of their sight; and yet after that, they knew he would be with them, and found it so upon all occasions, for "Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Heb. xiii. 8.

(5.) He is thus believed on in a world possessed of the greatest prejudice against him. Both the things and the persons in it are his enemies; it all lies under a curse. "If the world," says he, "hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." John xv. 18. As for the men of the world who have their portion in this life, they have no Bible character but that of "God's sword." They hate those who are chosen out from among them; and as they do not believe themselves, they rise with a perpetual anger against them that do. The Apostle desires to be "delivered from wicked and unreasonable men," and gives this as the ground of it, that "all men have not faith." You may conclude from his way of arguing, that though the men who have not faith pretend to the greatest moderation and to the brightest reason; yet really they are cruel and absurd, and such as the people of God had need pray to be delivered from. With what affection does he recommend himself to them upon this head? "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea." Rom. xv. 30, 31.

He that looks into a world that is unseen, and depends upon a world that is future, has much such a life as Noah had, by which he became an heir of the righteousness that is by faith, and condemned the world. Heb. xi. 7. They laughed at his preparing the ark, he was in vain a preacher of righteousness

among them; and the dispute between them held till the flood came and decided it. Nay, as Enoch walked with God by faith, he was the jest of those amongst whom he lived; and therefore from him we have a prophecy concerning Christ, and the vengeance he will take on unbelievers at the last day. It is above five thousand years since he foretold the scornful usage that ministers of the gospel should have; for he prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord comes with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, i. e. in their communions, of their ungodly deeds which they have committed, and of the hard speeches which they have spoken against him. Jude 14, 15.

Now when there is such a run against revealed religion, it must be the mighty power of God that makes a Christian resolved not to be laughed or threatened out of it. Here is a stone disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, and to them that believe, he is precious; though others stumble at the word, being disobedient. There is no right faith that does not conquer reputation, and overrule what may be said for it. "How can ye believe," said Christ, "who receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" John v. 44. It is too often that popularity steps in between us and our duty; hence we are told, that we must not only believe in our hearts the Lord Jesus, but confess with the mouth that God raised him from the dead. Rom. x. 9. It was here that the argument stuck with many of the Jews and Pharisees, of whom we are told, that they believed in him, but did not *confess* him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. John xii. 42, 43. The faith of Moses was just the reverse of what is said of these men, for he esteemed the reproach of Christ, that is, the reproach that he endured for him, to be greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect to the recompense of the reward. Heb. xi. 26.

He that is for present pay, and cannot trust a promise, is not fit to deal with our God in his covenant.

Nay, the *things* of this world are enemies to our faith; riches enter in and choke the word; and therefore they that are rich in this world are charged with a particular caution, not to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, 1 Tim. vi. 17, as if their trust could not be in both; if it is in riches, it is not in the living God. The faith that is right gives us a victory over the present world; we shall sell as though we sold not, and buy as though we possessed not, and use these things as not abusing them, 1 Cor. vii. 30, 31. And is not this a mystery that there should be such a person as a believer upon earth? One, who though he walks in the flesh, does not war after the flesh? whose body is upon earth, and his conversation in heaven? because his heart is upon things above, where Jesus sits at the right hand of God. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; for greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God; he that knows God, hears us; he that knows not God, hears not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error, Phil. iii. 20; Col. iii. 1; 1 John iv. 4—6.

(6.) It is further strange that he is believed on in a world that is under the power of his most obstinate enemy. The influence of the evil spirit is declared in the very pride that denies it. There are no greater examples of this truth than among those who have it in contempt. He is "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience. From the fulness of his command, and the efficacy of his temptations, he is called "the god of this world;" as such, he "blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." He himself believes and trembles, and if sinners believed, they would tremble too; therefore,

on purpose to hinder a godly sorrow that works repentance, he keeps them as stupid as he can.

Nor can I account for the opposition that is made to the gospel any other way. Where is the temptation for men to be angry that their Saviour is their God, that his death is their atonement, that his grace is their fund, and his righteousness their plea? If these are errors, they are very delightful ones. I am sure they lay things out for our hope, and yet men are enraged that their Redeemer is so great, their happiness so good, and the covenant so certain. What can this be owing to, but as the apostle saith, that they are "set on fire of hell?" When a man strives to believe against himself, takes pains not to be settled on his lees, but to be unsettled, and not to know what he shall trust to, it is an unnatural way of sinning. Well might our Saviour say, "he that sins against me, wrongs his own soul; all they that hate me love death," Prov. viii. 36. Now believing gives us a victory over him who leads so many thousands captive at his pleasure. He loseth a soul, when that soul gets a right faith: there is one of the strongest creatures baffled, and one of the craftiest outwitted.

(7.) It is strange that people should believe on Christ in a world where nothing is to be got by it. I do not affirm this in the strict sense of the words, for you know godliness has the promise of all things; but my meaning is, that the soul, in the recumbence of its faith upon Christ Jesus, looks above all riches, honours, and every endearment of life. A life that is carried on by faith in the Son of God, is a life that is hidden, obscured and reserved. It is not looking at things that are seen, but "at those that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal." And how great must that principle be, that foils the senses in their own kingdom? that takes off the soul from them when they have all their arguments about them? "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that mortality might be swallowed up of life," 2 Cor. v. 4.

IV. I am now to show, that for the world to believe in Christ Jesus as God who was manifest in the flesh, is a means of promoting that religion that ever was and ever will be the ornament of any profession. It is a "Mystery of GODLINESS." There is no necessity for opposing revelation to duty, as if they who preached up one were careless about the other. They are joined together: "Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth." We have no dry speculations, nor any doctrine which is not according to godliness. The believer has not received and admired a set of unmoving opinions, but the grace of God that brings salvation has taught him to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." You are to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things, by filling up every relation. Tit. ii. 10. 12. Nor are there any better examples of those works that are good and profitable to men, than among them that believe in Christ Jesus. "Ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost. So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia; for from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad." 1 Thes. i. 6—8.

This will appear if you do but consider with impartial thoughts, what the great business of religion is, and to what purposes it is both recommended as a practice, and promised as a blessing. I take it to consist in these four things: 1. A subjection to Christ's authority, and a conformity to his image; this may be called inward religion, and thus I shall consider it in the principle. 2. There arises from this a duty both to God and man, which is commanded in the two tables of the moral law. 3. It is a branch of this religion to make a profession of Christ, to own him in the world, and show forth his praises. 4. The joys and satisfaction that Christ gives to his people who

thus wait upon him, may come into the general notion that we have of godliness. Now all these are begun, advanced and extended by the belief of those mysteries that we meet with in the faith, and in particular that he is a God who was manifest in the flesh.

1. You will see how the doctrine of incarnation is a mystery of godliness, if you do but consider that it is thus we come by our principle of subjection to Christ's authority, and conformity to his image. He has made us for his service, and believing in him is obeying him. He has also made us for his delight, and thus believing in him is growing like unto him. We have both these notions of holiness conveyed to us in Scripture. He is equally the Sovereign and the Original of every good man, "Whom God foreknew them did he predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." Rom. viii. 29. Now each of these supposes your receiving him *as God;* for without this there is no duty to his empire, and there can be no resemblance of his purity.

(1.) It is as he is *God* that we believe in him to all the purposes of subjection and duty. The gospel is made known for the obedience of faith; the obedience that flows from faith as a consequence, and is included in it as a property; for the very act of believing is a homage to his sovereignty, who gave us the revelation. It is our allegiance to his truth, that we depend upon his word, and surrender every thought that would make an opposition to his command and person. That we are to have this regard of him in our approaches to him is plain, owning him as "Lord of all;" and therefore the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God, through his appointment and his blessing, to the pulling down strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

Here you may observe a Divine appointment of the ministry, "we do not war after the flesh." Here

is also that which renders it effectual, it is "mighty through God." And can we suppose that all this while God is working for a creature? that he sends out his great power in the preaching of the gospel to advance any less than himself? No, it is not to be imagined; and therefore those high things that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God, must be brought into captivity to the obedience of *Christ*. The knowledge of *God*, and the obedience of *Christ*, are the same thing; it is but one opposition that is offered to them both, and the moment that a person is cured of his ignorance and pride, he comes into a state of duty; so that you see an obedience to Christ is the great end of our ministry, the thing for which we preach, and which is carried on with a Divine blessing.

And again, he that is the efficient is also the final cause of our salvation. As of him, and through him, so to him are all things, Rom. xi. 36. But if Christ is not God, we may say, here is an almighty power inspiring the word, merely for the sake of a creature. And what an unaccountable imagination must it give us, to think that God alone is the great end of every other work, all things are done that he may be glorified, but that Christ is to be the principal gainer in the chief design? If the graces of the Holy Spirit are given to fill you with a reverence to the Mediator, to make him the object of your fear, and love, and hope, and to bring you into a state of communion with him, you must either conclude that he is a God, or that religion makes you exceed in your apprehensions of him. "He is thy Lord," said David to the church, "and worship thou him," Psal. xlv. 11; and as the sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre, he is the God whose throne is for ever and ever.

(2.) It is only from a sense of his Deity that our believing in him can give us a conformity to him. Good men have no other author than God, unless you will suppose that the new life is not so well made as the old one, and that grace is of a lower original than nature. At first God made man in his own

image, and after his own likeness; and when he is created anew in Christ Jesus, is it after one who is not Divine? Shall the better life be after the model of a creature, whilst the lower and the worse is taken from the Deity itself? for the new man is "renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him," Col. iii. 10.

Consider this transformation upon the believer both ways, either in its principle, as it is infused and implanted in him, or in its progress, as it is carried on by acts of faith; the author of the former, and the object of the latter, can be no other than God. Now, we are said to be made holy by Christ Jesus in each of these respects. You find them in one verse, "Both he that sanctifies, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren," Heb. ii. 11. It is plain this is not said of the Father, but of Him who was made "perfect through sufferings;" and we here read of this person as one that sanctifies; he is the author of all that purity that his people receive. Their religion is given, as well as conducted by him. This cannot be affirmed of him as a man; for though in that respect he is a noble example of sanctification, yet he cannot be the author of it. As a man, he is of the same original with believers; "they are all of one, and therefore he is not ashamed to call them brethren." This supposes him to be sanctified himself; but as a sanctifier, he cannot be said to call them brethren. They are his creation, the work of his hands, the effect of his holiness and love.

And he cannot be conceived of as doing this for them, unless he is God; the Sanctifier must be the Creator. "He that has wrought us for the selfsame thing, is God," and he can be no other. David begs for it under a proper title, and from a proper hand. "Create in me a clean heart, O God." "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean," saith God in the Old Testament. "It is God that works in us both to will and to do," saith the apostle in the New. "Of his own will begat he us again

with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." Can we think, after so many claims of the Divine nature to the work of sanctification, that it should ever be attributed to a creature? Must it be said of one who is not God, that it is "He who sanctifies?" Is he not only the object, but the author of your faith? Well, if he has made you believers, as he certainly has, then there is in you the exceeding greatness of an Almighty power; no less than that which raised himself from the dead, and set him on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

And besides, how can any act of faith produce such a turn within us, that whilst we see him, we are "changed from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord," unless the object on which it fixes be God? We are to the praise of his glory, who have trusted in Christ, after we have heard the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation; in whom, after we have believed, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, Eph. i. 12, 13. The resembling virtue is not in the principle, but in the object. We see a thousand things and believe them, that do not make us like themselves: and how comes it to pass, that when we see Christ as he is, we shall be like him, but only that he has a power of creation in himself? To this purpose he is proposed to our faith. For this end we are to believe *in him;* not only believe that he is the Messiah, the person appointed by God to treat with men, but we believe *in him*, that *by him* we may have the life begun, *in him* we may have it continued, and *with him* we may have it perfected.

It is a very poor and low notion of Christianity, to think that it requires no more than an assent that Christ is the Messiah, the anointed of God, and that they that thus believe shall be saved; as if it was enough, that a man's sentiments kept him from being either a Jew or a Mahometan. I dare say the devils believe in this sense, and they tremble at it. But if we are to talk of faith as the Scripture does, we must

make a great deal more of it. It is a principle that not only pays homage to, but draws a life and virtue from him with whom it corresponds; and such a one can be no less than God. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men," is an expression that imports a Deity, as full as any words can do. "The life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show to you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us," 1 John i. 2.

But now, if people do not look upon him as God, who is thus believed on in the world, as I do not see how they can pay a proper veneration to him, so there is no resemblance that they can desire to have of him. It is in vain to hope that looking to him will make you like him, unless there is a creating virtue either in the act or the object. Either faith itself must have the power of changing you, or it must be in Him whom you thus contemplate. He will at last change your vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body; and for that he must have a power able to subdue all things to himself. Phil. iii. 21. And does he speak of any less when he tells Paul, That he will open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them who are sanctified by the faith that is in him? Acts xxvi. 18. Their sanctification is begun by him in opening their eyes, and it is always considered in him. This then is the first account that you may take of godliness, that it is a principle of subjection and conformity to Christ; and it could not be either of these, if he was not God.

2. This godliness also takes into it the duty that we have so good a rule for in the word of God. He that has this esteem for Christ, and this resemblance of him, must himself walk as he also walked. He that believes in Christ must be careful to maintain good works, which are good and profitable to men. "This is a faithful saying; and these things I will," says the apostle, "that thou affirm constantly." What I now

mean takes into it the whole compass of duty. Herein are we to exercise ourselves, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and man. But I do not see how either we are capable of regarding Christ in such an authority as to obey him, or be thus useful to others upon that ground, if we do not believe his Divinity.

(1.) Without this there must be an end of all our duty to him. As a Prophet he might declare it; but if he is not God, it is wrong for him to receive it. It involves him in the guilt of usurpation, and us in the danger of idolatry. "The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, and he will save us," was the free profession of the church in the Old Testament; and I can never be of opinion that we ought to talk any lower language in the New. "There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy." Lord, say they, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou hast wrought all our works in us. O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. James iv. 12; Isa. xxvi. 12, 13. Are not these declarations too great a tribute for any creature? and yet in an equal strain are we taught by the New Testament, to speak both of Christ, and to him. He will ordain peace for us, in him we must have peace. He has wrought our works in us, every branch in him bears fruit. "I in them," saith he to the Father, "and thou in me." We name the name of Christ, we are called by it, we look upon him as "Lord of all." It is he that has ordained a religion for the world, and having all power both in heaven and earth, has appointed us to teach all things that he hath commanded. Mat. xxviii. 20.

(2.) That part of duty which has a regard to others, supposes that he by whose authority we do it can be no less than God. Thus saith the apostle, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." 2 Cor. iv. 5. He was ready to be spent among them; but the end of all this was for advancing the glory of a Re-

deemer. And can we think he intends any lower person in that sentence than Nehemiah did, who professes that he durst not act as other rulers had done, because of the fear of God? Was he under an awe from his Maker? and has a Christian all his motive and restraint from a creature?

Servants are directed to keep up the duty of their relation with a decency that will recommend a good profession, "that they may adorn the doctrine of *God* our Saviour in all things." Tit. ii. 10. What God and Saviour is this who claims a propriety in the doctrine they are to adorn? It is easy to see he understands it of a doctrine peculiar to Christians. They lived among those of a "contrary part," as you read a few verses before. There were among them "unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision, who subverted whole houses, teaching things that they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." They are bid "not to give heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men." This opposition was all against the Christian doctrine. The Jews were no enemies to the revelation of the Old Testament. But besides, he speaks of a word manifested in due time, "through preaching committed to him according to the commandment of God our Saviour." This is the title under which he declares him; for he has made us sufficiently acquainted what this commandment of God our Saviour was, by telling us that the gospel he preached was "not taught of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." This is the doctrine of God our Saviour, which servants are to adorn in all things.

And we may carry the same interpretation through the next words, that "the grace of God" (of this God who was manifest in the flesh) "that brings salvation, has appeared unto all men," and in looking for the blessed hope, we also expect "the glorious appearing of the *great God* and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" or, as the words may be read, "of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." This agrees to the directions he gives about relative duties in other places. "Ser-

vants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto *Christ:* not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of *Christ*, doing the will of *God* from the heart; with good will doing service as to the *Lord*, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man does, the same shall he receive of the *Lord*, whether he be bond or free." So we read, that "one is our Master, even *Christ*." Eph. vi. 5. 8. Mat. xxiii. 10.

3. This godliness demands from us a profession of what we believe. There must be an "acknowledgment of the truth which is after godliness." Christ tells Ananias, concerning Saul: "He is a chosen vessel to *me*, to bear *my* name before the gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." Our light is to shine before men; we are every way to hold forth the word of life, and show the praises of him that hath called us. Phil. ii. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 9. And I do not see there is any doing this, unless we are persuaded of his Divinity, because it is thus we come first to a certainty, and then to a confidence in our profession.

(1.) In believing Christ to be God, we act upon a certainty; we tell mankind in plain words what our souls think of him, and do not go about with a company of uncertain sounds. Seeing we have such hope we use great plainness of speech. He that hath a dream let him tell a dream; but he that hath my word let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord? 2 Cor. iii. 12; Jer. xxiii. 28. It is not to be thought that Christ, who sealed the doctrine of the gospel with his blood, and sent it abroad with such an effusion of his Spirit, ever designed that preachers should cover their opinions with scandalous ambiguities. "Having this ministry, we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully." A notion that will not endure plain language, is a notion that cannot bear the light, and is fitter for wizards that peep and mutter, than the servants of the God of truth. When he bids us blow the

trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in his holy mountain, he did not mean a broken trumpet, that gives out a double or a confused and a grating sound. There should be no mistaking the note; for, as you find by the argument, even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? So likewise you, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken, for ye shall speak into the air? If I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be to him that speaks a barbarian, and he that speaks shall be a barbarian to me. 1 Cor. xiv. 7—9. 11.

In saying that Christ is "the mighty God, the everlasting Father," Isa. ix. 6, that "his goings forth are of old from everlasting," that "he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," that "of his kingdom there shall be no end," that "all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made," Mic. v. 2; Luke i. 33; John i. 3; we use open and undisguised expressions; whatever difficulty there is in the doctrine, there is none in the words. We refer you for arguments to plain Scripture. We say not these things as men, but the gospel says the same also; and we cannot suppose that God speaks unintelligibly in matters of the greatest concern to our faith and practice.

But it is making the whole revelation vain, to give the expressions such a sense when they are used of Christ, as would be harsh and improper if applied to any other occasion. It is easy to see that God speaks of himself as he does of no one else. Nothing can be plainer, than that though divine titles are given to angels and men, there is no danger of confounding them with him, or supposing that the name of God signifies that in the one, that it does in the other. But if the account he gives us of Christ is to be understood with such limitations, it is a pity that he has not been a great deal more distinct, and shown us that though the words he uses for himself and our Saviour are exactly the same, yet the sense is so widely dif-

ferent; especially when he has said, "I am the Lord (or Jehovah;) that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another," Isa. xlii. 8.

It is unhappy that we read of him as the *mighty God*, who is not self-sufficient, or, as they rather choose to rumble it out, not self-originated. We are confounded in these words, that he is "before all things," "in the beginning with God," and "from everlasting." Such characters of the Father are always understood of a proper eternity; but when applied to the Son, they lose their meaning, and signify not the thousandth part so much as they used to do; but instead of being an instruction to lead our faith, become great swelling words of vanity to confound it. So again, we are apt to think when we read that "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," that it means no more than another sentence, "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made;" or, that "by him all things consist;" that he has "laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of his hands," John i. 3; Col. i. 17; Heb. i. 10. This is talking plainly, and tells the world what we have received; that the same things are said with equal force of words of the Father and the Son; and, according to our good Confession, they are "the same in substance, equal in power and glory." But if creation signifies in some of these Scriptures what is peculiar to the Deity, and in others what may be done by a creature, our faith is entangled by the very book that should set it at liberty; and we must look upon revelation as that which our God would not have to be understood, whereas he has not spoken in secret, or a dark place of the earth, Isa. xlv. 19.

Our preaching and your profession are neither of them such frivolous uncertain things. We are bid in "doctrine to show uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned." Certainly he does not mean speech that cannot be understood. We are not to talk of a dependent God, of an eternity that had a beginning, of an Omnipotence

that is derived, of a subordinate Creator, of a person that has all the titles of divinity, and not one of them just and proper. You who are bid to "give a reason for the hope that is in you," are not left to any of these shuffling ways. Mankind are to know what you would be at: error needs a disguise, but truth will not bear it. You are neither to run nor to talk uncertainly, and we are neither to fight nor to preach as those that beat the air, who make a noise and a bustle, but no mortal knows what they strike at.

Let us speak the mystery of Christ boldly, and not persuade people by deceitful words one day to believe that we are with them, and after that explain it all away again. These two arts are as dishonourable to human nature, as they are to the gospel of Christ; confessions that hide the truth, and explanations that darken the sense. But though error will always have the wriggle of its author, who is a winding crooked serpent, yet blessed be God, truth will be a shining light that shines more and more unto a perfect day. If Christ is not God, the case is clear; we ought not to call him so, nor do any thing to delude people into a persuasion that we think so. If he is God, we may speak it out without any drain to the expression, and let mankind see that we are not leading them to mean more by what we say, than we do ourselves. But the words of the Lord, those that relate to himself, must have a free course, unclogged, unlimited, and so be glorified. It is by this honest profession that we shall stand our ground. "Our exhortation is not of uncleanness, nor of deceit, nor in guile; but as we are allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God which trieth our hearts," 1 Thes. ii. 3, 4.

(2.) This gives us a confidence in our profession, we take it to be a duty, according to that rule, "watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men, be strong." A faith that is not to be declared belongs neither to the Old Testament nor the

New. As the apostle says, "we having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I have believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." This was his way of arguing, as it had been David's before him, that they who believe it are to speak it. But what a spirit of faith is that, which is bold for concealment, and makes a stand against professing, and turns the reasoning quite otherwise; 'we believe, and therefore we will not speak;' that reproaches a good confession, and calls it by all the odious names that are given to the vilest actions in the world? May it not be said upon a comparison between these examples of the Bible, and those of later ages, "David I know, and Paul I know;" their believing led them into a necessity of speaking, but who are these dumb believers that muzzle their faith with a pretence of charity?

There is such a thing as being ashamed of God's words before an adulterous and sinful generation. In opposition to which, our Saviour has made a noble promise to those that confess him before men. Such as these "will the Son of man confess when he comes in the glory of his Father." He has a particular regard to them now, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation that is coming upon the world to try all them that are upon the earth," Rev. iii. 10. They that have sought righteousness and meekness, "shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger;" when such as rejoice in their pride, and are haughty because of God's holy mountain, are taken away from the midst of us: the remnant of Israel who do not speak lies, nor suffer a deceitful tongue to be found in their mouths, shall lie down, and have none to make them afraid, Zeph. ii. 2, 3; iii. 11. 13. But this is little in comparison of the great reserves in another world; for "he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in them that believe, (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day," 2 Thes. i. 10. Then will the name of our Lord Jesus

Christ be glorified in you, (that name which you have confessed before men,) and ye shall be glorified in him.

4. Under this name of godliness we may include what is peculiar to it; I mean, the joys and satisfaction that Christ gives to his own people. These are sometimes called "a hope in God," sometimes "a rejoicing in Christ Jesus," and sometimes "a comfort in the Holy Ghost." They are mentioned under several names quite through the Scriptures, to convince us of these two things, first, that there is a delightful part in religion; and, secondly, that this is of such a nature, that it cannot be the experience of any but a good man. He is satisfied from himself; Christ puts it upon faith in him, that if a person believes, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water, John vii. 38.

Now, you will soon perceive that faith in the great mystery of godliness, (God manifest in the flesh,) is the way to these consolations; and to that purpose I need remind you of no more than that it is he who pardons your iniquities. The peace that I speak of is the fruit of your acceptance, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. v. 1. Again, it is he who gives you a security of the great things that are laid up for those that love him. You are glad of the change that is begun in a reconciliation to God "through the death of his Son." And these joys are drawn out and swelled up from the prospect of another change, when you shall be "saved through his life;" that is, as he himself has called it, saved to the uttermost. These are what the apostle brings together within our thoughts, that we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and then rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Now, as it is our faith that tells us of a pardon here, and assures us of an arrival at heaven hereafter, and for that fixes upon Christ Jesus, so it must regard him in his Deity. Without such a consideration of him there can be none of this peace, and joy, and

hope in believing, as you will see in the two particulars I have now mentioned: 1st, it is as God that he forgives our iniquities; 2dly, as a God he takes us into his glory, and therefore the satisfaction that arises from a sense of the former, and a hope of the latter, supposes our belief of his Deity.

(1.) One reason of our rejoicing in Christ Jesus is, because he pardons our sins. The Scripture has given us this truth in several views; first, Christ as a mediator places himself between God and man. He was the daysman between us, and laid his hand upon us both; "he is our peace," Job ix. 33; Eph. ii. 14. Secondly, Christ as man, made of a woman, and made under the law, became a curse for us. In the former character, he procured our pardon, in the latter, he deserved it. "He made peace through the blood of his cross." Thirdly, He may also be said to give it, as we often find he does. Now, where he speaks in that language, he appears to be no less than the great God. Laying down the price of our pardon, gives him no right to bestow it; that belongs to him who receives the satisfaction, not to him that makes it. Our debt was to the Divine nature, and our discharge must be from it. The human nature could suffer, but it could not forgive; and therefore he does this, not in the form of a servant, but as one who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." In order to present this argument in a proper light, I will do these two things; first, Show you that he who is believed on in the world, does and can forgive our iniquities; and secondly, That this is altogether the prerogative of a God.

[1.] It is plain from the whole story of our blessed Saviour, that he "pardons iniquity, transgression, and sin." There are several passages both in the Old and New Testament, which tell us that the God who went before the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan, was he who should afterwards be manifest in the flesh. Both Jews and Christians understand it of a Redeemer, the second of those "three that bear record in heaven." Moses suffered "the reproach of *Christ;*"

they who died in the wilderness "tempted *Christ.*" He that came from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, glorious in his apparel, and travelling in the greatness of his strength, is one who has trodden the wine-press alone: in all their affliction he was afflicted, Isa. lxiii. 1, 2, 3. 9. That passage of Moses's seeing God, is better applied to One who was to be incarnate, than to the Father, whom no man has seen at any time. When he proclaimed the name of the Lord, and made his goodness to pass before him, it was in these terms: "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin." And when after this, we read of the angels going before them, it is added, "He will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him." The expression signifies a power that he has in himself of condemning or absolving.

Now there is "one law-giver who is able to save and to destroy." Moses says to him, "Thou Lord art seen of us face to face," and prays, "I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is long-suffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity, and transgression. Pardon I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy; and as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt until now. And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word, but as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord," Num. xiv. 14. 17—21.

Thus it was foretold, that one of his names whereby he should be called, was "the Prince of peace;" and that this not only signified that he should proclaim it as a minister, and procure it as a sacrifice, but give it as a proprietor, is evident from the situation of that title. It stands upon a level with the other four, "Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father." To these is added a fifth, that he is the "Prince of peace." "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end;"

so that our peace comes from him as a Governor. "Dominion and fear are with him, he maketh peace in his high places," Job xxv. 2.

He was "born King of the Jews," as the wise men were taught to say by the star that appeared to them in their own country. And how did he open his empire? Not in the gross way that his own nation expected, but by giving "knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins," Luke i. 77. His greatness appeared in doing away iniquity. He finished transgression, and made an end of sin in a twofold capacity, first, As one who had a power to do it; and, secondly, As one that had the merit to claim it. Messiah is called "the Prince," though he was to be "cut off," Dan. ix. 25, 26.

Antecedent to his suffering of death, by which he brought in an everlasting righteousness, he used to join those two things together which David admires in the Most High God. It is he who forgiveth thine iniquities and healeth thy diseases; and thus in a double sense redeemeth thy life from destruction, Psal. ciii. 3. How common was it for him to say, "Son or daughter be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee?" And again, "Go thy way, thy faith has made thee whole." Do but consider, that in such language he must design a great deal more than to work a miracle. All that was visible to the world, and upon which he was to raise the reputation of a Messiah, was doing a wonder. If they saw that the sick were cured in this extraordinary way, it was enough to establish the argument, that a great prophet was come among them, and God had visited his people. But he speaks of things which they could not see, and to which the miracles that he wrought were to carry on their meditations, a pardon of sins to the recovered person as what his faith had depended on. The prophets who performed several wonders never talked of either of these. As for instance, Elisha did not insist upon faith in Naaman the Syrian, but the cure was wrought whilst the patient was an unbeliever. It is quite otherwise in the story

of Christ Jesus. He used very often to ask the question of those that came to him, "Believe ye that I am able?" And in some places "he did not many mighty works, because of their unbelief." Thus he said to the man whose prayer was wavering, ("if thou canst do any thing, help us;") "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."

So that, you see, it was not enough that they were to be convinced of his having a Divine commission, but there must be a faith in himself. This lay secret to the eyes of the world, but he that knew the heart, gave testimony to it, sometimes in these words, "Thy faith has saved thee;" sometimes, "According to your faith be it unto you." He showed himself more than the Sovereign of nature, one who could discharge the miseries of poor creatures; he does at the same time take upon him a much greater character, as the Lord of grace; and from the fulness of the Godhead, that dwelt in him bodily, he says to them that their sins are forgiven.

To his own practice he has formed the ministry of his servants. They are to preach the gospel of repentance for the remission of sins. Repentance and remission of sins were to be preached among all nations in his name, Luke xxiv. 47. He tells Saul, that the success of the gospel should be the turning people from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them who are sanctified by faith that is in him, Acts xxvi. 18: as if he would set his mark upon faith, he says the "faith that is in ME," because *there* it is to fix; and if it does so, I must tell you, it regards him as more than a Mediator; for under the notion of a Mediator, it is "*by* him that we believe in God, who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, that our faith and hope may be in God," 1 Pet. i. 21. But by the faith that is *in* him we have the forgiveness of our sins, and an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. We do not only believe that he died for us, and that forgiveness comes by him, by him as a procurer, and by him as a

price, but it is *in him*, as the original disposer. Thus the apostles preached and acted. "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth," said Peter to the lame man, "rise up and walk." And he is also "a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins."

2. I must observe to you, that this belongs to none but God. Though as man he "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," that is, in order to deserve and procure the blessing, yet the giving it is a glory that the Most High will never transfer to another. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?" Mic. vii. 18. And when the promise runs so full and free, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon;" Isa. lv. 7, 8; on purpose both to assure the believer and to glorify himself, he adds, "for my ways are not your ways, neither are your thoughts my thoughts, saith the Lord." 'When I talk of abundant pardon, and of having mercy, it is the language of a God; I speak of that which creatures may admire, but can never imitate.' Thus saith he in another place, "I even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake." And the New Testament carries the matter as high. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth;" and therefore it must be very assuming for any to speak in such a manner as the Most High has made peculiar to himself.

It gave the Jews great offence whenever they heard our Saviour pronounce those words, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." People that were astonished at the miracle lost all the benefits of what they saw, by an opinion that the man spake blasphemies, because none could forgive sins but God only. Here was an opportunity for Christ to show them that this was not peculiar to the Deity, that it might be communicated to a creature; and if he had meant no more than

declaring them pardoned, there had been no room for the objection of the Pharisees. No doubt of it, they could remember what Nathan said to David, "The Lord has put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." And had Christ said no more than that, though they might question his commission, they would never have charged him with blasphemy. Now what way does he take to answer the accusation? Not by contradicting their maxim, and the foundation they went upon, (that none could forgive sins but God only;) no, he leaves them in possession of that sentiment, as what was true and very dutiful to the Divine nature. But he goes on to assert his own right of forgiving sins, in maintenance of what he had often said, that he and the Father were one, and that whatever the Father does, the same does the Son likewise. His argument deserves your attention; "That ye may know that the Son of man has power upon earth to forgive sins, he saith to the sick of the palsy, Arise." Mark ii. 10, 11. This gift of healing never proved a power to forgive sins in any other. When Elisha recovered Naaman, and restored a dead man to life, he did not pretend to pardon either of them; and therefore how can our Saviour make the one an evidence of the other, but by taking upon him a character that no prophet ever had? All their virtue was in a commission, but his was his own. They might be directed to pronounce the sentence, but he had power even upon earth to forgive sins, and he appeals to a miracle as the argument of it. A miracle was to witness that in his case, which it never had done in any other.

[2.] It is as a God that we have any hope of glory from him. He saith, "my sheep hear my voice, and I give to them eternal life," John x. 27, 28. Now we know that "the gift of God is eternal life," Rom. vi. 23; and surely he would never have us expect from him the greatest bounty and evidence of the Deity if he was only a creature. "He that is our God, is the God of salvation;" and thus "the Author of eternal salvation to all that obey him," Psal. lxviii. 20; Heb.

v. 9. He may well say, "All that the Father hath is mine," when he pretends to the disposal of our everlasting inheritance.

As Mediator we have this life for his sake, and by his means; he leads us to the fountains of living waters; but as God he gives them, and wipes away all tears from our eyes. There must be an infinite distance between deserving this eternal life, and bestowing it; dying for it, and presiding over it. Our dear Lord sustains both these characters, though the notion that some would give us of him, that he is the first-born of the creation, made greater, and better, and older than all the world, comes within neither of them; and that this super-angelical Spirit became the soul of that body which he received of the virgin. In this representation he is neither low enough to be a sacrifice, nor high enough to be a Saviour. They have neither made him capable of suffering for the procurement of this life, nor of being glorious in bestowing it. For in order to dying, he must have all the infirmities of a man, a soul subject to terrors, as well as a body to pain; and in order to the giving of heaven, he must have "the fulness of him that fills all in all." "Do not err, my beloved brethren, every good gift, and every perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness or shadow of turning." Therefore, whatever lower names he takes upon him to signify the reality of his humiliation, yet he always speaks up to the dignity of a God, when he mentions those things that are gifts of the Divine nature. He that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, is the only wise God our Saviour. Jude 24, 25.

You must understand such an expression as Peter uses in a twofold construction, when he says to the Jews, "Ye have killed the Prince of life;" as man he was not the Prince of life, and as the Prince of life he could not be killed. They stumbled for want of distinguishing right, when he tells them, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me." They knew

not what to make of it. "We have heard out of the law that Christ abides for ever; how sayest thou then the Son of man must be lifted up?" John xii. 32. 34. So that though they killed him, he had an eternal life within his empire, and what must ever be the matter of his donation. But by dying he appeared to be in all things like unto his brethren, and when he is called the Prince of life, it supposes that to be his property, which is the greatest and best argument that we can have of a God.

Do but examine into that peace which a believer has from Christ, without any regard to his Deity. Think that he is forgiven by one who is not the Sovereign, not the principally offended party. Whereas David prays, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. For against thee, thee only have I sinned." According to the modern notions, our remission comes from one who is no more than a servant. We cannot conclude from hence, that whom the Son makes free, he is free indeed, if the Son is not supreme over his own house. If he has a superior over him, then, as the apostle says, "he differs nothing from a servant, though he be Lord of all."

But it is from this that the peace of a believer flows; he knows that God is judge of all, and that he has reconciled us to himself, not imputing our trespasses. He also knows, that the person in whom we have forgiveness through his blood, was in the beginning with God, and that Spirit by whom we are sealed to the day of redemption, as he does the work, has the attributes of the Most High.

I will now discharge my thoughts of this branch of the Christian religion with a short *application.* If it is part of the mystery of godliness, that Christ is "believed on in the world," then,

1. You see how both ministers and people may best fall in with the design of Christianity; the one by preaching up this faith, and the other by receiving it. That believing in Christ Jesus will be more

than a name, that it will fill the hearts and form the lives of his peculiar people, is very true; but certainly the faith that we are promoting is something more than mere morality. Either there is to be a receiving of this report that we go about the world with, and an esteem of something that we could never have known by the light of nature, or otherwise I do not see why Christ should have come amongst us. If living with justice and mercy had been all that religion expected from you, our Redeemer might have purchased you at a cheaper rate than with the expense of his blood. We need never have heard of "God manifest in the flesh," in order to be "justified in the Spirit," but might have shifted as they did in those ages and generations to whom these things were hid.

God has distinguished us in a way that has been expressive of his condescension, and if it was not necessary to our happiness, it might much better have been spared. But if he is believed on in the world, it supposes there are doctrines to be received which nothing but revelation could declare; and therefore when we set morality against these doctrines it is unnatural, and when we set it above them it is ungrateful. Christ calls himself "the light," and tells them that they must "believe in the light," that they might be "children of light," John xii. 36.

We should never have known there was any more than one person concerned in our redemption, the very name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, would have been an eternal secret, had not God given us the Bible; and as this opens to us what must have been hid for ever, so certainly it becomes us to receive the testimony. It is "life eternal to know Jesus Christ," John xvii. 3. He manifested the name of God to the men who were given him out of the world, and they kept his word. By refusing the great mysteries of religion, we throw ourselves back again into rude nature, and uncultivated humanity; it is a scorn returned upon all the benevolence of Divine wisdom; it is choosing darkness rather than light; it is striking at the eternal veracity of God,

"For he that believes not the record has made him a liar," 1 John v. 10.

2. If that is one branch of religion, that Christ is believed on in the world, no wonder that Satan sets himself in opposition to it. He blinds "the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them," 2 Cor. iv. 4, 5. In Popery he converted the doctrines of Christianity into "old wives' fables," things that were unworthy of reason and revelation too. Now that the folly of that part is made manifest, he varies the malice, and works in another form; as before he hurried on the reverence of the people for human mysteries, so now he teaches them to growl against those that are Divine. If he can but any way engage you against the truth, either by denying a doctrine, or deriding a solemnity, he refuses no degrees of service. But as the testimony of Jesus calls us to oppose "the man of sin," so it gives us the same concern that our religion be not run away with by the men of sense. For this also is a character that we find among the enemies of the truth; "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God;" and there are some "who separate themselves, being sensual, not having the Spirit," Jude 19.

They that would not be ashamed of Christ and his words, will have a trial of their courage. Certainly, if he is believed on in the world, he must be preached to the world. "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher? Supposing that Paul had never insisted on more than he did to Felix, "righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come," would that have been declaring the whole counsel of God?" Were these "the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the fellowship of the mystery that from the beginning was hid in God," Eph. iii. 8, 9. Had any authority or advices endeavoured to confine his ministry to these subjects, whose interest would those people have been pursuing? They that withstand our words, when they are words of truth and soberness, are act-

ing under the enemy; they that oppose themselves, and who do not acknowledge the truth, are in the snare of the devil, and led captive by him at his pleasure, 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26.

3. How great a wickedness must theirs be who would hinder the faith of Jesus in the world! I have shown you under the former head that it has in it the spirit of Satan; and though some people may think it no great matter that preachers are restrained from insisting upon the heads of pure revelation, yet the impiety that this leads to is the greatest that we are capable of. When the Spirit of grace comes, who is to convince the world of sin, he sets his particular mark upon this, that they believe not in Christ; John xvi. 9; as if there was something in that viler than all immorality. The apostle calls himself "the chief of sinners;" not that he was scandalous in his conversation, lewd and filthy in his behaviour; but "a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious," which were all the fruits of his "ignorance and unbelief," 1 Tim. i. 13. No wonder then that they who set themselves against the Deity of Christ, have such low thoughts of the Holy Spirit who is charged to exalt him. But one serious touch of his hand is enough to divide the clouds of darkness, as well as to break a course of impiety. "The mystery that in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, is now revealed to the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit," Eph. iii. 5.

4. What need have we to be very earnest for that faith which is of the operation of God! "No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," 1 Cor. xii. 3. We have lived to see that no liberties of worship can secure the gospel we profess from the contempt of men. "Beware therefore lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Pray for that Spirit who will lead us into all truth. His testimony will be a victory over others, and a security to yourselves. There are some that would seduce you, "but the anointing

which ye have received of him abides in you; it teaches you of all things, and is true, and is no lie; and as it has taught you, ye shall abide in him," 1 John ii. 27. Endeavour to go out in his strength. There is a wisdom and a spirit which none of your adversaries will be able to gainsay or resist. Desire that he will open your understandings, that ye may know the Scriptures, that the word of God may dwell richly in you; that you may not be as "children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine by the craft of men, who lie in wait to deceive; but grow up unto him in all things who is the head, even Christ," Eph. iv. 14, 15.

5. See that this end is answered upon your souls. We preach Christ Jesus, warning every man, and teaching every man, that we may present every man perfect in him. Col. i. 28. But how vain will it be upon your account to have it said, that this foundation which is laid in Zion, is to you a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence? We may say, as Christ did, notwithstanding all the evidence that is given to the glory of his person, and the nature of his design, "Blessed is he whoever is not offended in him." This faith which I am recommending to you goes deeper than a bare assent to the doctrines of the gospel. If you are no more than proselytes or disputants, after you have been teachers of others, yourselves may be cast away. But show by a good conversation that this is a doctrine according to godliness; let your duty be an argument that you take it, not as "a vain thing," but as "your life;" that you feel it in experience, and deliver it out in practice, holding forth the word of life; and then whatever your poor ministers meet with here, in the day of Christ Jesus we shall rejoice together, that we have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain. Yea, if we be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, we will rejoice with you all. Phil. ii. 16, 17.

6. Be sure that in believing on him you regard all his perfections. There is no equivalent to his Deity. If he is a God, this cannot be denied with any pos-

sible reparation. The Socinians said that he was a man, only more enriched with a Divine power than any other. The Arians allowed his pre-existence, but yet made him a creature, by saying, there was a time when he was not. The bladder is now a little more blown, but the finer it is, the thinner it is. They tell us of an "eternal emanation" to which he owes his being. This is a word contrived on purpose to confound us between beginning and no beginning, a creature and no creature, as I may show you at large from the next and last head of our religion, that he was "received into glory."

CHAPTER II.

GOD WAS RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY.

These words give us the last part of our religion; concerning the whole of which we may say, "Great without controversy is the mystery of godliness." The Person spoken of has his name continued quite through the story; that as it is *God* who was "manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, and believed on in the world," so he is no other than *God*, who is "received up into glory."

This branch is placed in a good light, and receives a proper advantage from what was said before. He was manifest in the flesh, with all the simplicity and contempt of human nature, as a root out of a dry ground, with no form or comeliness in him: but it is otherwise in the next world, for there he appears in glory. Or, you may take the several parts of the text in this relation to one another; that though Christ was to be low and despised, yet there were honours of two sorts designed for him;

First, Some on earth, where he is "justified in the Spirit," approved, admired, and adored by his own people; to which purpose he is "preached to the

gentiles," that he might widen his kingdom, and carry it beyond the limits that for several ages had been set to the true religion. The success of this is agreeable to the design; for he is "believed on in the world;" the entrance of the gospel was not in vain. The Spirit who had the custody of a Redeemer's honour, and was to justify him, did his office, first, by giving the gospel, and, then, by attending it. This was a better balance to all the troubles that he met with, than any external pomp could have been. It was more glorious in itself, and more desirable to him, to have converts bowing to his authority, than princes waiting at his gate. When Satan offered him the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, it was too little. He has more satisfaction from "the travail of his soul," in one sinner that repents, than in all the monarchies and empires of the universe. It was in this sense that he is spoken of, as one lifting up the head, after he had drunk of the brook that ran in the way. Not that he was to have an outward greatness; but the rod of his strength he sends out of Zion, and his way of ruling among enemies is by making them a willing people in the day of his power. Psal. cx. 2, 3. 7. That is one sort of honour designed for him, with regard to which the kingdom was to be the Lord's, and he the Governor among the nations. But then, the mystery of godliness tells us things of another nature; that as he was manifest and justified, preached and believed on; so,

Secondly, Our thoughts are called after him into the place whither he is gone. It was before observed that he is "seen of angels," the object of their care as he is a man, of their wonder as he is a Mediator, and of their adoration as he is the God of their nature as well as the friend of ours. Now, as there were three branches of the Christian doctrine that relate to his advancement upon earth in a religious empire; so there are two that your meditations may apply to heaven; that which I have now mentioned, his being "seen of angels," and this that closes up the whole account, that he was "received into glory." You

know the method in which I have considered all the other parts of this subject, and I see no reason to change it in the last. I shall therefore,

1. Open to you the meaning of this sentence, that Christ was "received into glory."

2. Make good this character that runs through the whole text, and show you that this, as well as the rest, belongs to him as *God.*

3. Let you see that this is one of those *mysteries* that the natural man receives not; but which the Spirit of truth sets home with a mighty and useful evidence upon the hearts of believers.

4. Show that this principle leads to that *godliness* which Christianity is to promote in this world, on purpose to work us up for a better.

I. I begin with the first of these, and that is to open the meaning of the sentence; or, how we are to understand it, that our Saviour was "received into glory." Here are two words made use of, which must be considered apart. [1.] The *glory* that he went into. [2.] The manner of his being *received* thither.

[1.] We read of a glory that he is now in, who was once manifest in the flesh; and that agrees to the whole stream of the Bible, both in the Old and New Testament. These two things are always the doctrine that God revealed concerning a Redeemer:

First, That he should be very mean and miserable, "the seed of the woman," and therefore born in sorrow; the reproach of men, the abhorrence of his own nation; punished and forsaken by the God that sent him; accused and tortured, under the curse of his own law, as a worm, and no man, crawling upon the earth, trampled on without any care or pity. Such an unhappy life, such a wretched death, was all along described as the lot appointed for him, "by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God." Acts ii. 23.

Secondly, There was also another character under which he is spoken of from the beginning of the promise. He is "slain from the foundation of the world,"

and as early was he triumphant, to "bruise the serpent's head;" notwithstanding that "his visage was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men," yet he is a conqueror, he leads "captivity captive." And these are not to be dashed against one another, as so many contradictions, but there is a harmony, a consistency in the whole story. His poverty is not to be pleaded against his fulness, but was the way to it, and the ground of it. His pain and vexation were things from which he passed over to the joy that was set before him. The powers of darkness, to which he was subject, had but their hour. After a little while, it was his turn to "divide the portion with the great, and the spoil with the strong." Now, the glory of our Saviour is mentioned in the Scripture with a great variety, to suit the different apprehensions that the Holy Spirit has given us of him. 1. Consider him as a *man*, and then his glory is the advancement of that nature which he took into union with himself, to the right hand of the Majesty on high. 2. Consider him as a *Mediator*, as one who partook of both the natures for which he was concerned, and his glory comes under another view. Thus "angels, principalities and powers, are made subject to him." 3. He has a glory antecedent and superior to each of these; what he calls a glory "with the Father," the same that he had "before the world was." John xvii. 5. This is underived and independent, what he has in himself, and in a transcendent communion with the other two persons of the Divine nature.

The Scripture has given us all these in a plain distinction; for, as there are many places that make it evident the glory of the Son is inferior to that of the Father, that there is between them the distance of a creature from a God; so there are others that we cannot understand but of an equal glory between the Father and the Son, without changing the sense of the words, and making them signify *that* in divinity, which they never did, and never could do in any thing else.

(1.) I begin with that glory of our blessed Saviour, which he was received into as *man*. Indeed I ought to make an apology for this, because as the character of Deity is conveyed through all the branches of the mystery of godliness; as he is God who was manifest in the flesh, and is now received up into glory; so it is plain he speaks of that which is infinitely superior to the account we have of him as man. The words belonging to him as God, should be considered so as to keep that always in view.

I take the objection to be pertinent enough, but I humbly hope it may be overruled by this answer; that though it is very true the Holy Spirit in my text speaks all along of a God, yet it is of him as appearing in our nature, and managing the greatest concern with it. The first branch of this mystery led us to consider him not only as a God, but as "manifest in in the flesh." And though the glory that I am now going to enlarge upon, which is given to the human nature, is no proof of a Divinity, yet he received it into fellowship with that which was.

He who is a God, had a body prepared for him in which he died, and which he has taken with him, and by an unspeakable union has derived to it a glory. This glory of the human nature, which our blessed Saviour is pleased to mention, will comprehend the following particulars, and may be considered as opposed to the humiliation that he suffered. 1. His body was weak and frail, subject to the same infirmities with ourselves, but now it is perfect. 2. He here bare our burdens, and sunk under his own, but now he is fully at rest and quiet. 3. He was upon earth rejected and exposed to shame, but now this nature is admired with the greatest reputation. 4. His soul was subject to the fears and sorrows of life, but now he is above all those impressions. 5. He wanted as we do the supplies of food and rest, but now he is independent on every thing of that nature. 6. He was earthy, being made of a woman, but now his body is said to be glorious. 7. He here submitted to death, but now he lives for ever. 8. He was moving

to and fro, and had not where to lay his head, but now he is fixed. 9. He was in this world as a servant; he sits in the same nature in the other as a Judge. 10. His union with the Deity was but little seen upon earth, to what it will be in heaven. You observe that all these particulars, except the two last, may be considered in him not only as our head and friend, but our original and pattern—that it will be with us as it is with him.

1. One article of glory that Christ is received into as man, or rather that into which he as God took our nature, was the perfection of that nature. He is "the holy child Jesus;" he is made better than ever Adam was, both in soul and body; and that is more than can be said of him here upon earth. For though he had no sin, nor was he tainted with the least impurity, yet there was a great deal of difference between him and our first parents, when they came fresh out of the hand of God. Christ was as holy as they, but not so strong and lively. His human nature had the Divine image in all the spiritual characters that belong to it; but there was a greatness, a health in Adam's body, and a happiness in his soul, which our Saviour had not; and the reason is plain. The first Adam was created by God to have a heaven upon earth; his paradise was to be a state of glory below; and therefore he was framed and wrought up in such a way as to be capable of receiving all the delights of the place; and that could not be without a full strength of body, and the utmost perfection of mind. But the second Adam was sent down from a heaven above, not to find one below. This earth was rather a hell to him, because here he endured what they do, the wrath of God, the curse of the law, the wages of sin. It is said by way of dignity, that man was made "a little lower than the angels," as a creature "crowned with glory and honour;" but when Jesus was made a little lower than the angels, it was "for the suffering of death." Upon this account it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren. Heb. ii. 7. 9. 17. Without that, he could never have

been a faithful High-priest to God, or a merciful one to us. He was to feel our infirmities, that he might be able to deliver those that are tempted. And "as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise himself took part of the same," i. e. in the way that they had it; a weak body, a contracted soul; the one liable to hunger, pain, and death; the other to sorrow, mistake, and fear, any further than it was guided by a nature that is light, and in which there is no darkness at all; for we read of him, that he "grew in wisdom" as well as "stature;" "he was found in fashion as a man," "he came in the likeness of sinful flesh." Luke ii. 52; Phil. ii. 8; Rom. viii. 3.

But now he has this nature in perfection, as good as it was when God made it "after his own image, and in his own likeness." There was something in the human nature in Adam, that bore a resemblance of the Divine. He was made "in the similitude of God." Whatever this was, our Saviour, who was pleased to be without it upon earth, possesses it all in heaven. There is a glory both in his soul and body, which Paradise never knew. All the spiritual faculties, all the outward members are filled and fashioned, so as to make him "the first born of every creature." "He is fairer than the sons of men." That was not true upon earth; for his visage was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men; but now grace is poured into his lips, and God, even his God, has anointed him with the oil of gladness above every creature, Col. i. 15. Psal. xlv. 2. 7.

The human nature of Christ may be called "the beginning of the creation of God;" not that it was made first, but as it is made the best of any thing. Our first parents were crowned with glory and honour, and made a little lower than the angels. Their constitution was agreeable to their station; as they were set over the lower world, they were framed but a little worse than the higher. But this nature in its first edition, is not equal to what heaven discovers in the second. "There is a natural body, and there is a spi-

ritual body: the first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven," 1 Cor. xv. 44—47.

There were but three bodies that the hand of God is said to form; all the rest he leaves to the course of nature. The first was Adam's wrought out of the earth; the second Eve's, which was taken out of man; and these being the Divine workmanship were perfect in their kind, and carried in them the full glory of the nature. Angels might see what sort of creatures they were. But there is a third that exceeds in both, and that is our blessed Lord's. He speaks of it to the Father with joy, "a body hast thou prepared me," Heb. x. 5. Though he was made of a woman, yet God himself had the working of the materials, the preparation was all Divine. It was by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, by the coming down of the power of the Highest; and therefore upon this account, that holy thing which was born of the Virgin should be called the Son of God, Luke i. 35.

This was the masterpiece of the creation, the noblest work of God's hand. It is said of Adam, "out of the ground thou was taken; dust thou art;" and it will be true of us all, that "the dust shall return to the earth, as it was;" but there was a holy One who should never see corruption, Psal. xvi. 10. It is true, this glory was much hid during the time of his life. He was far from being seen to an advantage here. When his face once shone as the sun, it was a transfiguration: and therefore he is taken up, where he appears to be made so much better than the angels, as a man; as he has by the inheritance that belonged to him as a God, obtained a more excellent name than they, Heb. i. 4.

In this he is our pattern. When he changes our vile bodies, it is that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, Phil. iii. 21. We can make no judgment of it here. The beloved disciple was astonished at what he saw; though it is plain the vision

was adapted to his capacity, and confined on purpose to make it familiar; but he tells us, that his head and his hairs where white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters: and he had in his hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength: and when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead; (this is said by one who had so often leaned on his bosom, and spoken into his ear,) and he laid his right hand upon me, saying, fear not, I am the first and the last, Rev. i. 14—17. Saul, as he went to Damascus at mid-day, saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun; that is he saw Christ Jesus the Lord, Acts xxvi. 13. In Him we have the original of our happiness; for thus, in our degree, it shall be with us. When we come to the measure of a perfect man, it is into the fulness of the stature of Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. ix. 1.

2. The glory of the human nature in our Redeemer takes into it a full rest and quietness. Here he bare our burdens, and carried our sorrows: nay, there were several things that showed the imperfection of this nature. He was far from having the strength of Samson. Though he is said to have the government upon his shoulder, yet this cannot be understood of him as a man; for when they only laid upon him his cross, he was not able to bear it. He fainted in the day of adversity, which showed his strength to be small. He submitted in his private capacity to a toilsome business, as we read of his father's being a carpenter; so the Scripture has told us he was subject to him. When he went about after his baptism, though his being anointed with the Holy Ghost gave him power in a spiritual sense, yet he was sensible of weariness when he sat down at the well of Samaria. It is observed that the multitude thronged him; that he was tired with long exhortations and fastings; and he crossed the sea of Tiberias, on purpose that he might have leisure to eat. He once taught them out

of a ship, the multitude being on shore, lest he should suffer any inconvenience by the crowd; and a great deal more we read of, to show us that he had both the quality and the afflictions of human nature: that as he was a man born of a woman, so, like all others, he was but of few days, and full of trouble.

We have his own sentiments of the load that was appointed to him, in the lamentations of the Psalmist. I am poured out like water, all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels; my strength is dried up like a potsherd; my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and thou hast brought me to the dust of death. Psal. xxii. 14, 15. This is not the language of the Divine nature; that "cannot be tempted with evil." James i. 13. But these things prove that he was the man Christ Jesus; and therefore in the story of his life, the title that seems to be the most beloved, is that of "the Son of man;" as if he was determined to rivet this doctrine into the minds of his people, that as being near of kin to us, he had the right of redemption in him. He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

But now, all these incumbrances to the human nature are over. It is said of his people, "They rest in their beds, they enter into peace, each one walking in his uprightness." "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours." "There the prisoners hear not the voice of the oppressor, there the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest." There is "a rest that remains for the people of God;" and into this Christ has led us the way. For though many thousands got to heaven before his resurrection, yet his was the first body that went thither out of the grave. Enoch was translated that he should not see death; but Christ is risen from the dead, and become "the first fruits of them that slept." "For David," as the apostle observes, "is not yet ascended into heaven." You will see of what part this must be understood by the

argument that he brings for it, "That he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." But Christ is entered into his rest, and has ceased from his own works, as God did from his. 1 Pet. iv. 1.

The great God speaks oftentimes after the manner of men, and he was pleased to give us this account of the creation, that when he appointed the Sabbath day, he *rested* and was refreshed. With allusion to this, our Saviour's mediation upon earth was compared to a creation. He that sat upon the throne, said, behold, I make all things new; and it is represented as a work of toil, but heaven is to him a Sabbath. When he bowed his head upon the cross, he said, "It is finished." He has gone through the work that was given him to do, as a faithful servant to him that appointed him. God speaks otherwise both to Moses and Joshua, than he did to Christ. He says to the former, "Thou shalt not bring this people over Jordan;" he was to leave the design incomplete. And he speaks with such a limitation to Joshua, "The days draw near that thou must die, and yet there remains very much land to be possessed." But this could never be said of our blessed Lord, who glorified God on earth, and finished the work that was given him to do. John xvii. 4.

The apostle observes, that there was a certain plan by which his enemies proceeded with him. This was laid in God's decree, and revealed in his book; but as they could not enter into the one, so they were strangers to the true sense of the other. And yet it is said, that "when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre." There is now an end of those strong cryings and tears that he offered in the days of his flesh. There is no more obedience by the things that he suffered. He is said now to be made *perfect*, not only in the constitution, but in the situation of his nature. He is placed above all his fears and troubles, and has no burden but that, which his

people shall enjoy with him, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." He says to the Father, "I am no more in the world, but I come unto thee."

3. The glory of Christ's human nature is distinguished from, and opposed to that shame and reproach which he suffered. He was despised and rejected of men; they hid their faces from him, and esteemed him not. Isa. liii. 2, 3. Sometimes this was owing to the meanness of his person. They saw no form or comeliness in him, that they should desire him; and sometimes to the vileness of his character, "We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." As he says, "They that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, he trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him." Psal. xxii. 7, 8. And again he cries out, "Many bulls have compassed me, strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round about, they gaped upon me with their mouths like a ravening and a roaring lion." Every title of greatness that he took upon him became their jest. They bantered him with a purple robe, put a reed into his hand, a crown of thorns upon his head, bowed the knee before him, saying, "Hail King of the Jews!" He gave his cheek to them that plucked off the hair, he hid not his face from shame and spitting. Isa. l. 6, 7. But he knew this would not be always: he submitted to it, like one that waits for the morning, and in the words of the prophet, says, He would not be confounded, because the great God was near to justify him, and therefore he set his face like a flint, and should not be ashamed.

Now, it is plain, that when he looked upon this change of condition, he expected it in another world. He died under all the scandal that a person could have upon him; accursed by the ceremonial law, for it is written, "cursed is every one that is hanged on a tree;" loaded with reproach and darkness by the very people that had once owned his miracles, "he saved others himself he cannot save:" blasphemed by the priests, insulted by the rabble, neglected by his

followers, who stood afar off, grieved and confounded with the sight of what they did not understand.

But out of all these clouds he rose into glory; and though his name was then covered with darkness, yet now he has "a name above every name." The title of Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, was written upon his cross in letters of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, to distribute his infamy all over the world; but "at this name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." However scandalous and filthy the high-priest's garments might appear when they were stained with the blood of sacrifices, yet this was no blemish to him, when he went into the holiest of all. And thus is our great High-Priest glorious in his apparel; he has trod the wine-press of the wrath of Almighty God. Having by himself purged away our sins, he *for ever* sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, Heb. i. 3.

4. There is another glory that our dear Lord, as the Son of Man, is now possessed of, by which he is distinguished from what he was upon earth; and that is, the pleasure and satisfaction that will fill his soul for ever. Even this part of his human nature came under the weight of humiliation. He was liable to sorrows and fears, being "in all points tempted as we are," sin only excepted. He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and compassed about with infirmity, as if he determined in making good the blessing of Abraham, to revive the experience of Abraham; for it is observed of the old patriarch, when he entered into covenant with God, that "a horror of great darkness fell upon him;" and so it was with Him who is called "the son of Abraham."

In the transaction between the Father and him, though it was upon a "council of peace" that had been agreed on before, yet he recoils, he flinches, and cries out, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." In that agony there was not only a pressure and force upon his body, to make his sweat like drops of blood; but he complains that the main weight lay

more within, for his soul was "exceeding sorrowful unto death." At the entrance upon the solemnity, it is said, that "he began to be sorrowful, and very heavy;" not in the same sense that the word is used of the disciples, that they were heavy with sleep, but his mind and affections were borne down. "The arrows of the Almighty stuck within him, the poison whereof drank up his spirits;" and no wonder that he complained of a load, when "God laid upon him the iniquity of us all." This was all along designed to be the chief part of his sufferings; and therefore we read not only that it "pleased the Father to bruise him," but to "put him to grief." And, as if it was not enough that he should be a sacrifice in the body of his flesh through death, he also made his soul an offering for sin. It was from an adversity that fell upon this part, that he bewailed his case upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Psal. xxii. 1. That cannot be understood of a nature which, as he says, was still in heaven. There is no conceiving of an anger or a distance between the Father and Son as they are one; nor does the affliction he there complains of relate merely to his body; for the violence of his death was no argument that God forsook him. We know that he did not forsake the Martyrs; they were not left of God; and so Christ might be hung upon the cross, torn with nails, and pierced with spears, hated, derided, and killed, and yet all this while God be with him as he was with them.

But the Father's forsaking him is to be understood of a cloud upon his soul, not unlike that which the damned feel; for he is said to be "made a curse," to redeem them that were under the curse. When he says, "thou will not leave my soul in hell," it intimates the nature of his torments, that he trod the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God. This signifies a great deal more than his body was capable of enduring; but as he was partaker of our flesh and blood, he likewise received such a soul as we have. His *soul* was an offering

for sin; he shall see the travail of his *soul;* he poured out his *soul* unto death, Isa. liii. 10—12. This, by the way, shows us what wretched work the new scheme makes of our religion, and of Him that established it. Their notion is, that λογος *the word* was a created spirit, but far above the angels; and that this spirit was made to animate the human body; and as we are compounded of soul and flesh, so the man Christ Jesus has nothing of ours about him, but the external part; that the soul which moved his body was not like ours, but a supernatural spirit that had so glorious a being before. Thus you see, having denied his proper Deity, and supposed him no more than a spirit, inferior to the great God, they will do the same by his humanity, not allowing him to be a proper man. He shall have nothing of God but the name, and nothing of man but the flesh.

Are these the discoveries of our polite age? Is it by such talk as this, that we are to trample upon the names and works of those who have served their several generations according to the will of God, and whose praises till now, were in all the churches of Christ? Is it thus that we improve upon the hoary heads that have been found in the way of righteousness? Are people resolved to make clear work with our religion, and come among the doctrines that belong to it as roaring lions, seeking what they may devour? Shall we have a Saviour that is neither God nor man? Can they deny the reality of the two natures at once? We are told long ago, that "many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things that we have wrought." It is apparent from all the language of Scripture, that he had a soul inferior to what they will allow, capable of sorrow from what it felt, and of fears from what it dreaded; to which the Almighty was a terror, and which became an offering for sin. Now, the glory that this soul was received into, is that of eternal quietness. There is no pain to make it grieve,

no danger to make it uneasy. He entered into his rest, in the view of which, he endured the cross, and despised the shame; for I would observe to you, that Christ Jesus as a man was the greatest believer that ever lived. We have a noble instance of his faith, that he "committed himself to Him who judgeth righteously." The apostle Peter, who applies the words of the Psalmist to him, gives us this eminent example. "David speaks concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved." David's speaking concerning him may be understood two ways: First, of David's own experience, that his support under all troubles was having this Lord before him; or, secondly, that David speaks in his name, and so it must be applied to Christ, that the Lord was before his face. And therefore, says he, did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; my flesh shall rest in hope, because, though my soul must be thrown into something like a hell, yet thou wilt not leave it there, no more than my body is to be left in the grave; for thou wilt not suffer thy holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life, thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

This varies a little from the passage as we have it in the Psalms. The apostle does not keep to what some call plain words of Scripture, for there it is, "Thou wilt show me the path of life, in thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." Psal. xvi. ult. But the meaning is this, that the soul of Christ, which had so much bitterness appointed to it, was to be refreshed as those of his people will be. He rejoiced, as believers do, "in hope of the glory of God." This was "the joy set before him," προκειμενη χαρα, lying over against him. The ways of life were made known to him. It was to this nature that "the angel appeared" in the garden "to strengthen him." How can that passage be reconciled to the beloved notions of our day? In what sense could an angel strengthen him? Not in his body, for giving strength to that would be easing

it of its load; but instead of any abatement, immediately after the angel had done this, "his sweat was as great drops of blood falling to the ground." And if he had no other soul than that "super-angelic spirit" which some talk of, how would an angel strengthen that, for "without controversy the less is blessed of the better." As to his body he received no strength, and as to such a soul he needed none. But if you consider him possessed, as he really was, of a spirit liable to be overwhelmed with grief, and tortured with fear, made a little lower than the angels, one of them might come down and do a friendly part to an inferior creature, as his human nature certainly was.

5. The glory that he was received into as man comprehends an independence upon all those supplies that are needful here below. He wanted, as we do, the recruits of rest and food. "Meats are for the belly, and the belly for meats." Our heavenly Father knows that we have need of these things. The angels who appeared in the Old Testament, and put on a human form, seemed to eat and drink. Abraham made a dinner for those that came to him in the plain of Mamre. Lot entertained angels unawares. It is easy to conceive, that they could have several ways of conveying food out of the sight of men, and making a show of doing what they really did not. For we are not to suppose that they, who in that world neither eat nor drink, would come down into this upon any such errand. Only they appeared to do thus to establish and comfort the faith of those they conversed with.

But our Lord's body was of another kind, and could not subsist without the common ways that we are forced to take. It is reckoned in Moses an extraordinary thing, that he should be in the mount with God forty days and forty nights, and neither eat nor drink. Deut. ix. 18. It is the same with Elias, who fasted so long, till he came to Horeb, the mount of God. These things are indeed miraculous, that the human nature should be so supported by unusual favours. And thus we are to conceive of our Lord's

being in the wilderness, and yet it is said, that "he afterwards hungered." His desires for meat, (as we read he would have eaten,) were so strong, that upon this Satan raises a temptation, "If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread." He sat down for mere weariness at the well of Samaria, and begged a cup of cold water from the woman who came thither to draw. But now this body is received into glory. As he is God, and has a power of subduing all things to himself, so he is the author of that change that shall pass upon us; as man he is the pattern or example of it. You have both these in one verse. He shall change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto his glorious body according to the power whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself. Our translation flattens the sense and fulness of the original. It is said, we look for a Saviour Christ Jesus the Lord, ὁς μετασχηματισει, who shall transform, give a new appearance to our bodies; and what we render vile body, is σωμα της ταπεινωσεως ἡμων, the body of that frailty that now belongs to us. Our vanity, meanness and disorders are seen in the bodies that we carry about with us. But these shall be συμμορφα, conformed to, cast into the same mould with, σωμα της δοξης ἀυτϑ, the body of his glory, that which he wears in the state of his reward and perfection. It is indeed the same that he had below, but it moves and appears in quite another manner; no longer wanting either food or rest. We are now maintained with the bread that perishes. It does so in our using it, to put us in mind of what I observed before, that "meats are for the belly and the belly for meats, and God shall destroy both it and them." These are bodies of our vanity; but the body that our Lord has received into his glory is the sample of what we shall be at the resurrection.

I do not know that ever men of polite notions and generous principles have yet considered the subsistence that the body of Christ has at present, or that which his people shall have when they rise again; but it is easy to guess what they will say. About the year 1655, one Mr. Biddle published a catechism,

wherein the answers were all plain words of Scripture, and in the preface to which he makes a terrible outcry about laying aside "the form of sound words," those that the Holy Ghost teaches, and bringing in terms of man's devising; but by his questions, he leads on the sense of the answer: and accordingly, when he puts the case, whether the great God has not a bodily shape as we have; whether he is not confined to a place, and liable to the turbulent passions of grief and anger; his answers are out of these texts, where we read of the eyes, the ears, the hands and feet, of the Lord; that his throne is in the heavens, that he grieves at his heart and repents, his wrath kindles, and his spirit is disquieted. If they will do thus by him, "whose dwelling is not with flesh," it is no wonder if they make gross work with their expositions of those Scriptures that relate to the bodies of Christ and his people, that were once really maintained with food; and the probability lies but too open, how they would understand our sitting with him at his table, drinking the new wine in our Father's kingdom, eating of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God. Nay, I may add that gracious promise that relates to this world, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, I will come and sup with him, and he with me," Rev. iii. 20. These are all of them words that the Holy Ghost teaches, no other than Scripture language; and the Holy Ghost teaches how to understand them; for "to the pure, all things are pure;" we compare "spiritual things with spiritual," not spiritual things with carnal. But to the unbelieving, nothing is pure. Their minds that should receive what God teaches, and their conscience that should obey what he commands, are both defiled, Tit. i. 15. There is a carnality and filthiness in all their conceptions; but we know that the departed saints hunger no more, nor thirst any more, neither shall the sun smite them, nor any heat, Rev. vii. 16.

6. Our Lord is said to have a "glorious body." He once bore the image of the first Adam, who was

"of the earth earthy;" he was "made of a woman;" he came "in the likeness of sinful flesh," though not in the pollution of it. But now we are expressly told, that he has a "glorious body;" what the words mean we shall not be able to tell, till we see what the thing is. We must "see him as he is." That at present we cannot do; for as it does not appear what we shall be, it as little appears what he is. He tells Moses, his face shall not be seen; no man can see him, and live. There is a glory even in his body, that our eyes are not able to bear. When he was transfigured before his disciples, "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." His raiment then was doubtless the same poor clothing that he took into the mountain with him. He had none of those soft and sumptuous garments that are fit for kings' houses, and yet even then he was "glorious in his apparel." What could this be owing to, and especially the brightness that his body appeared with?

Methinks he came to this world as Moses did out of the mount, putting a veil upon his face that his enemies should see no comeliness, that his friends might behold a "visage marred more than any man's;" but now he was out of their company who could bear none of his true countenance. In the mountain he will be more unlimited, and for a little time look like himself, to suit his acquaintance who met him from heaven, and to astonish those whom he took up with him from the earth. Moses and Elias appeared in glory, and talked with him. They made a thousand times a greater figure than he did among men; but upon the occasion of meeting with them, he will take off the veil, that Peter, James and John, who were his companions from below, might have a little sketch of what he shall be above. It is said, "the fashion of his countenance was altered." Though they knew him to be the same person, yet the lustre of his face was new to them, and his raiment white and glittering, as if it had been full of an inward glory, and prepared to send out the rays of

what it contained. Human nature could not bear this; it so wasted the spirits of Peter and his company, that they were heavy with sleep. It was living too fast. The attraction, the drain of such a vision was too great for these houses of clay; and they just awake again to see his glory, and the two men that were with him. And yet, this was nothing comparable to the body that he has in heaven. It is now rewarded for all the meanness that it submitted to, the shame and spitting that it suffered. The martyr Stephen, when he saw the heavens opened, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, is said to have looked steadfastly thither. He valued no noise of people, no rattling of stones. He might be joyfully untouched with all the thunder of death and the roar of devils, when he looked steadfastly to heaven, as if his soul was to go out through those eyes at which this glory came in, and immediately pass from seeing to taking, feeding, and possessing for ever. Such a vision would have killed him without the execution of stoning; human nature might die away in that happy gaze, as if his soul was not driven out by the wrath of this world, but licked up by the strength of another; exhaled, allured, and sucked away by the throne of the Lamb.

What a body was this! what a glory is it received into! it outshines the sun in all its brightness. Saul's eyes were scorched with what he saw, a sort of scales grew upon them, which held three days and three nights. He could not see for the glory of the light. When our Lord comes to sit on a great white throne, from his face the heaven and the earth will flee away, and there shall be found no place for them, Rev. xx. 11.

Well may it be said, that it does not appear what we shall be, when we are told that like unto this glorious body ours are to be fashioned in all things. Hence we read of "a spiritual body." Philosophy would call this a contradiction, but it is opposed to "a natural body," that which he had by nature, and that with which he lived in it. All the other descrip-

tions of the resurrection are to help us a little, though they still leave us short of knowing what a spiritual body means; but we are told that it is raised in *power*, capable of doing all the work of heaven; in *glory*, filled and adorned with all the delights of heaven: it is raised in *incorruption;* as it was put into the grave to moulder and return back again to dust, so it arose to die no more, but to be a pillar in the temple of God. That leads me to the next head.

7. The man Christ Jesus is received into the glory of an immortal life. He came down hither to die. "It is appointed unto men once to die," and so it was appointed for him; death had passed upon him, as it has done upon all that have sinned; for though he knew no sin, yet being made sin for us, "he became obedient to death, even the death of the cross." He looks upon this as a trust committed to him. "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again; this commandment have I received of my Father." John x. 18. And indeed by this he submitted to all the meanness of our nature. It is by dying that God stains the pride of all glory, and brings into contempt all the honourable of the earth. When tyrants and mighty men have flourished long enough, he looks on every one that is proud, and brings him low, and treads down the wicked in their places; he hides them in the dust together, and binds their faces in secret. This our Lord submitted to, but his resurrection did two things; first, It closed up all the design of one death; and, secondly, It was a security against the return of another. "Christ being raised from the dead, dies no more; death hath no more dominion over him; for in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he lives, he lives unto God." There are two things that may be considered in our blessed Lord, his person, and his office; as a man he could but die once, but as a priest he must have done it often, if he had not been more than a man; and upon this the apostle gives us a great argument, that he should not "offer himself often, as the high-priest enters into the holy place every year; for then he

must often have suffered since the foundation of the world." Heb. ix. 25. Well, why does he not? Not merely because he died, for that the creatures which were typical of him did in vast multitudes, and a continual succession. Had he been only a man, his sacrifice could have had no more than a yearly virtue. "But now once in the end of the world he has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He was once offered to bear the sin of many," and that once was enough; so that now "to them that look for him, he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation." He observes again in the following chapter, that "we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all. Every priest stands daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sin; but this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, for ever sat down at the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool: for by one offering he has for ever perfected them that are sanctified." Heb. x. 10. 12.

Thus does Christ tell the beloved apostle, "I was dead, but I am alive, and I live for evermore." He is to come down here again. His body is to live where it was before. He shall come and "every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." Rev. i. 7. "This same Jesus," say the two angels that stood in white, "shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts i. 11. He is to "be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire." But it is not to live here again. This earth that was the place of his suffering shall feel his power; for when he sends out his voice, the earth shall give up its dead. There is a "second death" that comes after the second resurrection, that is, when soul and body shall be thrown together "into the lake of fire and brimstone;" as there is a first resurrection that comes before the first death. This is what God's people have, and the other is what they shall be delivered from. "Blessed and

holy is he who has part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power."

Now in this we are conformed to Christ Jesus. In our first resurrection, we are risen together with him, that like as Christ was raised by the glory of the Father, so we should walk in newness of life, Rom. vi. 4, 5. This is called a "being planted together in the likeness of his resurrection." Over such the second death shall have no power. The first indeed shall, as it had over him, but the great danger is from the second. There is but a small account made of them that kill the body, because after that, there is no more that they can do. But there is a great deal more, infinitely more that we may suffer. Now it is the happiness of believers that death comes but once to them, as it did to him.

8. The glory of the human nature in Christ Jesus signifies the eternal settlement that he entered into. Here he had no continuing city, he was a stranger and pilgrim upon earth. "The Son of Man had not where to lay his head," but went about doing good in Jerusalem, in Galilee, and Samaria, wandering to and fro. Thus he expresses his own life," I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following." But now he "has sat down for ever at the right hand of the Majesty on high," no more to toil and travel. This was the reward that the Father appointed to him. "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool," Psal. cx. 1. Sit thou there, not only as a dignity that he should be possessed of, but what he shall never be driven from. He is *for ever* sat down there; it is an eternal dignity. He had before prepared his throne in the heaven, and thither he takes his body. His people are before the throne day and night. He that sits upon the throne, and the Lamb, are objects of their praise and adoration for ever and ever.

And this was a proper reward for the hurry that he submitted to here. In his duty he was going about from place to place, for which he sometimes

gives this reason, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore I am sent; and he preached in the synagogues of Galilee." Thus it was in his sufferings; he is led from prison and judgment; first to the high-priest, and then to Pilate, then to Herod, and then back to Pilate again; then out to the people, and at last to the cross; driven, hauled, and compelled with force. As he said, "I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. I am gone like the shadow when it declineth; I am tossed up and down as the locust," Psal. cix. 22, 23. But now it is fixed. He is among things above; there Jesus sits at the right hand of God. It is from heaven that we wait for a Saviour, Christ Jesus the Lord. "The heavens have received him till the time of the restitution of all things," Acts iii. 21. The appearance he made to Stephen and to Saul was not by coming down, but by looking down; and in this he is a pattern to us. "Him that overcomes, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out," Rev. iii. 12. This is the portion of our souls, and there is the same provision for our bodies. When the dead in Christ are risen, then "we that are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord," 1 Thess. iv. 17.

9. The glory that the human nature of Christ is now received into, comprehends in it the greatness and the office of a Judge. This was all along designed for him as a reward of his humiliation. "The Father judgeth no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son. He has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man." When he had told them this, he opened the way of his entrance upon the charge. "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth; they have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation." This he speaks as a person deputed to the work; for

which reason he adds, "I of myself can do nothing; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father who hath sent me," John v. 22. 27—30. These and several other Scriptures make it plain, that he is to appear upon the throne in our nature, and therefore must be considered in that transaction as a servant. For when all things are put under his feet, "then shall the Son himself also be subject to Him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." He must deliver up "the kingdom to God even the Father," 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28.

But though his coming to judgment shall be with honour to him as a man, yet it supposes that he has a nature infinitely above it; for we are expressly told, that "God is judge of all," in which account he is distinguished from "Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant," Heb. xii. 24. And when the Lord speaks and calls "the earth, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof," it is to proclaim this as an incommunicable glory, that "God is judge himself," Psal. l. 1. 6, and indeed the characters of him who "sits on the throne judging right," are too great for our nature.

It is not as man that Christ can search the hearts, and try the reins; it is not as man, that he makes the dead hear his voice, and causes those that hear to live; it is not from any excellency in this lower nature, that he opens the books, and tries all mankind by what is written there, bringing iniquity to remembrance. This is the prerogative of Deity. "I am God, and there is none besides me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done," Isa. xlvi. 9, 10. And as this perfection is necessary to a judge, so the office that our Lord appears in, supposes him to be more than man, nay, more than a creature, in order to his discharge of it. When he told the high-priest that he was Christ the Son of God, he speaks of his "sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven," which they accounted no less than blas-

phemy. This in another place he calls coming "in the glory of his Father, with the angels, to reward every man according to his works." Upon his saying, "the Son of man should sit on the right hand of the power of God," they ask, "art thou then the Son of God?" concluding that this could never be the dignity of a creature.

But then it may be said, that he shows himself in the very nature that he took upon him. When he comes, "every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him." He is to come with the marks of their injury, and "all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him," Rev. i. 7. How different is this from the station allotted to him on earth! He came not hither to judge the world; he was far from pretending to any such character during his life among us. He professes himself not to be made a judge and divider over us. Instead of that, "he took upon him the form of a servant," both to God and man. He was "a servant of rulers." His enemies used him at their pleasure, as one whom man despises, and nations abhor; carried as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was subject to his parents; nay, when he became master of a family, though they that called him by that name said well, yet he was among them as one that serves. You find him washing their feet, which was the greatest and lowest act of respect in those countries; not only as a pattern of humility, but as an instance of humiliation. It is part of the obedience that he was sent into the world for. Thus the evangelist puts it: "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;" knowing this, he conforms himself to it; and how is that? "He rises up from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel and girded himself." There was a mystery in this action which the Spirit of grace and truth would afterwards explain to them. "What I do," said he to Peter, "thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." He was to be convinced with all

other believers, that the design of Christ, in taking upon him our nature, was to sink him as low as that nature could fall, not only for the suffering of death at last, but to be a sort of universal servant. We ought therefore not to please ourselves, "for even Christ pleased not himself, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me." Under this contempt did he go through the life that was appointed for him.

But he has the full reverse to all this meanness in being received up into glory. He is now no longer the servant of rulers, of disciples, or of enemies.—"Every tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." The very nature that appeared as "a root out of a dry ground," shriveled, withered, and defiled, is now to be placed on a throne. He does not lay aside his humanity till the work of judgment is over; no, but in the very flesh and blood with which he lived so meanly, shall we behold the glory that the Father has given him. He is as much found in fashion as a man upon the judgment-seat as he was upon the cross. All nations are to be collected and crowded before him; and he is so far from being ashamed of his conversation among us, that the trial of that day all along supposes it. "I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink." The meaning, as he himself explains it is, that his people were so used in a wicked world; but however, his putting it into these terms is a memorial that he was among us, and liable to the same usage.

Nay, in this quality shall he judge the very devils; they are to stand and tremble before a nature lower than their own; as in that nature he subdued them, and took from them "the power of death," so in that nature he will condemn and lay upon them the punishment of death. Herod and Pontius Pilate tossed him from one to another. His name and his people since that time have been the jest of kings; but when his wrath is kindled, they above all others are to "perish from the way." Whatever his title was formerly, it

is now "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." 1 Tim. vi. 15. It is part of his royalty. As a Prophet he is the "faithful witness," as a Priest "the first-begotten from the dead," and as a King "the prince of the kings of the earth." Rev. i. 5, 6. Thus he was revealed to Ezekiel. "Above the firmament there was the likeness of a throne, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." Ezek. i. 26.

10. The union with the Divine nature, which is the greatest glory that the human could have, is better known, revealed, and admired above. His name *Immanuel*, signifies, "God with us," and that not merely in a gracious presence; for in that sense God was always with his people, "known in their palaces for a refuge." But the words are to be understood of a union between two natures, that he should be with us as one of ourselves, like unto his brethren, and yet be God, truly, essentially, and eternally so. The people who knew him here had the discovery of this. "They saw his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," John i. 14. They did not merely take him for an extraordinary person, for that the very Jews did. There was no contest between them and their enemies, whether he was not the best teacher, and the most accomplished prophet that ever arose in Israel; insomuch, that they who denied his being the Son of God could not but ask the question, "When Christ comes, will he do more miracles than this man has done?" Nay, their wild and roving way of talking about him, though it was very wrong, yet showed the prodigious opinion they had of him. He said to Peter, "Who do men say that I the Son of man am?" By that they understood his question to be, not who do the pharisees, the perverse and hardened enemies of his kingdom, say he was; for then they would have answered, 'Some say, thou art a deceiver, others that thou hast a devil, and art mad, and several that thou dost by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, cast out devils.' But it is plain they

take his question in another view, and therefore give such an account of his reputation in the world, as we may be amazed at. "Some say thou art John the Baptist," (who but about half a year ago was beheaded;) "some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets."

This extravagant way of guessing showed their wonder as well as their ignorance. If they had not discovered in him something which they thought no mortal ever had, they would not have imagined a thing which the Scripture never spoke of, but was indeed the dream of Platonic philosophy, that after a man died, he was to live again. It was a foolish imagination; but they could not any other way account for the wisdom and authority with which he taught. And yet, though they supposed him more than a man, they fell short of what he really was. Therefore he puts the question again. "But who say ye that I am? Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This good confession does not only regard his *office*, but his NATURE. So that if holiness, wisdom, and all his other capacities for the work he comes about, could have given him the title of "the Son of God," I do not see but the Jews might have been brought to it. If they had thought, as some do now, that the name signified no more than a derived Deity, they that supposed that he was a person raised from the dead, wanted but a very little of the truth. But it is apparent that what Peter means by "the Son of God," was something which they had not the least apprehension of; as he says, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, flesh and blood has not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Flesh and blood had revealed it to the Jews that he was an extraordinary person. They knew that Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God among them by signs, and miracles, and wonders, which God did by him in the midst of them, Act ii. 22. His being approved of God, and God's working by him, which is all that some would have to be the doctrine of Christianity, you see was

the doctrine of Judaism. But his being united to God, that he and the Father were one, was always the great offence.

We are told by some interpreters now, that the oneness he claims to have with the Father was no other than that of consent. If that is all he meant by it the Jews would have allowed it. A little of this critical learning among them then, would have prevented their taking up stones to throw at him; so that the persons who deny the Divine nature might have come in seasonably to have saved the human. But this doctrine was that rock upon which he would build his church. And though the gates of hell have opened against it in every age, they have never been able to prevail.

Now, this union between the two natures was so glorious, that even as man he is called "the Son of God." Several things relating to this lower nature are brought in as reasons of the title. Thus his miraculous conception is dignified. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, and therefore that holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." Luke i. 35. The commission which he received at his baptism is another ground of the title. "Say ye of him whom the Father has sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said unto you, I am the Son of God?" John x. 36. His resurrection "declared him to be the Son of God with power;" Rom. i. 4; and with respect to this, as the apostle observes, the Father says, "thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Acts xiii. 33.

This was all along the confession of his people: "to whom shall we go but unto thee, for thou hast the words of eternal life." John vi. 68, 69. It cannot only mean that he proclaimed it, and directed to it; for every preacher in that sense has the words of eternal life; but he has them in a way suitable to a God. "We believe and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." This faith increased by the light with which he fed it. Thus at

the close of his life, he tells them, "The Father loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God." John xvi. 27. 29, 30.

To this faith of theirs does Christ himself give a testimony in his last prayer. "They have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee, for I have given unto them the words that thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." And this he mentions as the grand distinction between them and others. "O righteous Father, the world has not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." There is no believing without this. This hypostatical union between God and man, this mystical union between Christ and his people, are the great heads both of truth and wonder; "I in them, and thou in me."

And yet it is but little, even of this, that we are let into now, in comparison of what we shall come to see hereafter. "In that day," says Christ, "ye shall know that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and I in you." Though they knew it then, and witnessed a good confession to it, yet there was more of this light sown for the righteous. It was not yet come up, as it shall do in the time of harvest, with perfect evidence and full pleasure. When the men that blaspheme this union shall dread the wrath of the Lamb, then shall grace and nature in God's people be equal to one another. There will be no grace but what is become nature, and no nature that is any thing else but grace. There is to be no knowing in part, but entire daylight shall reveal the mystery, and bless the faculty. There we shall see what we now subscribe, that "a child born" is "the mighty God," and "a Son given" is "the everlasting Father."

Thus have I gone through these glories that belong to the human nature of our dear Lord, which are given to him as a man; but the Scripture informs us of other glories, those that he enjoys as Mediator between God and man, and such as he "had with the Father before the world was." These are to have a distinct meditation, as he said to Nathanael; Ye shall see greater things than these, the heavens opened, and angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man, John i. 51. All that I have spoken of, thus far, relates to "the man Christ Jesus;" in which he has put a dignity upon our nature, and is equally the friend and the sample of our happiness, "the first born among many brethren." But the others are peculiar to himself; they are glories that he will not give to another. In these we are to regard him not as an example, but as a head. I shall proceed to consider them in their order.

(2.) Christ as MEDIATOR manages the great concern that lay between God and man. Our notion of a Mediator is, that he transacts for two parties, and that he may be capable of doing it with the greatest equality, he must have his character one of these ways, either by negation, or by participation.

First, There may be a mediator, or middle person in a way of *negation*, i. e. he has no share in either of the natures. Such a one we might have had in any of the angels, who is neither God nor man. This is reckoned a good character in any umpire or referee upon earth. We think it a qualification that the judge, or person who determines between us, hath no interest in either party, but is purely indifferent, equally unswayed and undetermined on both sides. Now this would have done, if the Mediator, was to be at no expense. An angel might have transacted between God and us, if there was no more than carrying messages; but it cannot be expected that a creature, who has nothing to do with either party, should die by the command of the one, and for the guilt of the other. As an angel had not a greatness to deal with God, so it would never be thought that

he should have the tenderness to die for man; though he might be impartial yet he was insufficient. The Divine nature required more than he could *do*, and the human nature wanted more than he could *give*.

Secondly, A Mediator may be as well fitted for his work by *participation*, i. e. by having a share in both natures. This does as much qualify him for an equity in his proceedings, as if he had a concern in neither. If he is both God and man, he is as likely to move with an evenness between the two parties, as if he was neither. Had he been only God, our nature would have wanted a representative; had he been only man, the Divine nature had wanted an equal, and therefore these two are united: from whence we may conclude, that the whole transaction will be steady fair and uniform; and that the whole management will be zealous, hearty, and continued. Christ has a double interest in the mediation; he has that of a God. He is to see to it, that his own eternal nature is not injured, obscured or neglected; and then the nature he took upon him is also his own, and he must secure that from being lost, condemned, and ruined. Now the glory belonging to him as Mediator you may conceive of in these particulars: the stupendous union of the two natures; a separation to the work that is all his own; a discharge of the duty; an acquittance given him by the Father; the confirmation of this union for us; the wonder of the angels and saints as it is in heaven; and the continuance of the mediation there.

1. One glory of our dear Lord as Mediator, is the stupendous union of the two natures, by which he was capable of it. This is a subject that I have but newly parted with under the former head, where I considered the evidence that would be given to it as a great branch of that glory that is put upon the human nature. Nothing higher, better, or more comprehensive can be said of the body and soul that were prepared for him, than that they are united to a God. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are all represented as carrying on the work of salvation, bringing many

sons and daughters to glory; and the honour that rises out of this design, the songs and praises that are filled with it, equally regard them all. It may be said of each person, that he is "the only wise God our Saviour." Our happiness is sometimes ascribed to one, and sometimes to another, as if each one of the Three had been the sole agent. Thus it is "the God and *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ Jesus." And yet our praises are directed "to *Him* who has loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." And again it may be said without any diminution, that "we are saved by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of *the Holy Ghost*," Eph. i. 3; Rev. i. 5, 6; Tit. iii. 5. We have them all mentioned together, "the foreknowledge of God *the Father*, through sanctification of *the Spirit*, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of *Jesus Christ*," 1 Pet. i. 2.

However, there is something in the character of Christ Jesus as Mediator peculiar to himself. We say that he was God and man, both Creator and creature. He is the only person in the Divine nature who was united to the human, and he is the only part of the creation that was united to God.

The doctrine of Three Persons in the Deity is so plainly revealed in Scripture, that because people could not flatly deny it, they have tugged in vain at an explanation, and professing themselves to be wise, have become fools. The Sabellians imagined there was no other way to secure the unity of the Godhead, and yet keep up a Trinity but this, that we are to conceive of no more than one person under three sorts of names. 'When we look upon God as a Creator, we call him Father; as a Redeemer, he is the Son; and as a Sanctifier, the Holy Ghost.' This delusion made the ancients call them *Patripassians*, because they asserted that the Father suffered as truly as the Son. Thus do men lose their hold when they get out of their depth. Sabellius was convinced there could be but one God, and yet he knew that

the Divine attributes were plainly ascribed to him who came in the flesh, so that his error consisted in denying the distinction of persons. But it is plain from the whole language of the Bible, that Christ sustained those characters which the Father and the Holy Ghost did not; neither of these appeared in our nature, was "made of a woman, or made under the law." So that here is the first glory that belongs to him, who was born as a *Son*, and given as a *Child*, that his name should be called "Wonderful." Wonderful indeed! His human nature is "the beginning of the creation of God," not because it was made first, but as it is distinguished from the whole universe. Though it is a creature, yet there is something said of it, that can be true of no other; and so, though our praises are directed to the Divine nature, and not to the man Christ Jesus, we regard the Father and the Holy Spirit as much as him in all our devotions. Yet there is something stupendous in his person, besides the greatness of a God. We are to contemplate that union in him which there is in no one else; "for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. ii. 9.

2. The consequence of this is, his separation to the work that he came to do. Though saving the elect was a general concern, and the "Three in heaven" bear record to it, yet there was a part that he took in this design peculiar to himself. In ordaining him before the world unto our glory, the council of peace was between them both. We are redeemed by the Father and the Spirit, as well as the Son. "Our God is the God of salvation, and to God the Lord," to each Person, "belong the issues from death." But it cannot be said of any besides the Son, that he took part of our flesh and blood, that he died for us. "He trode the wine-press alone." Thus was he set apart to a work that none in the creation could do, and that none but himself in the Deity had done. The virtue, the merit, the success of his death, were all derived from that nature which he has equally with the Father and the Holy Ghost; but the torment, the suffering,

the actual expense was all personal. It is the "precious blood of Christ" by which we are redeemed, who was made "manifest in these last times." 1 Pet. i. 19, 20. We may not say that the Father was born, or that the Spirit was crucified.

I am sensible a thousand questions may be asked upon this subject, which the wisdom of men and angels will be unable to solve; but are we therefore to be driven out of it? Does it cease to be a truth, because it is a wonder? No, whatever controversy there has been and will be in the manner of talking about it, yet "without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, that God was manifest in the flesh." God above us is to be understood of a nature, but God with us is the description given of a person. This is the mystery that we are called to the acknowledgment of; "The mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col. ii. 2, 3.

3. Another glory belonging to Christ as the Mediator between God and man, arises from his discharge of the duty devolved upon him. He received our nature into a union with his own, for the sake of doing that which was left with him alone. There is none in heaven but he that undertook it, and none upon earth was able to succeed him in it. "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. This was no less important in itself, than expensive to him. He came upon earth to transact with God the things that appertained to the reconciliation of his people. This world having been the stage of rebellion must be the place of an atonement. He came to bear our sins, to carry our burdens. "The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all;" such a weight as no creature could be able to manage. Every believer sinks under the pressure of his own guilt. When iniquities go over his head, they are a burden too heavy for him to bear. How then would he be capable to answer for all the sins of all the elect, in all the places and

ages of the world? Thousands of thousands are now in glory, and vast numbers are yet to follow. Every one of these could say with David, "Innumerable evils have compassed me about, so that I am not able to lift up my head." Now, there must be a full compensation made to the justice of God for the whole number of their abominations. And who was able to pay such a debt? What merit could be equal to this mass of collected guilt? If the justice of God is to be satisfied, not only for every person, but for every particular crime, we must all be "concluded under sin." "When we were without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly; while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Rom. v. 6. 8.

Whatever was the meaning of John's vision, when he "saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals," it gave him an inward concern. Whether this was the book of the decrees, called in some places "the book of life," which was to be of no avail till it was opened and unsealed; or whether it was the book of trial by which the world is to be judged, and taking off the seals was to answer the charge recorded there, I cannot pretend to determine the sense of this awful emblem. But it is plain, the happiness of good people was a thing in the nearest connection with the opening of that book; that if the book was always shut, there could be no access for them, no security of the covenant, no entrance into the joys of the kingdom; and yet here seems to be a bar in the way of that design; for "a strong angel proclaimed with a loud voice, who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" Rev. v. 1, 2.

You may argue from this, first, That the design of love was at a stand; that the seals upon this book hindered the mercy of God from taking its compass; till these were loosed, nothing could be done. Secondly, You further see that it was a universal concern, what the whole creation must be attentive to; a strong angel with a loud voice delivers out the

proclamation. And, thirdly, It is also evident from the nature of his cry, that whoever undertook this great affair, must go through it in a way of merit. The question is, "Who is worthy" to do it? This includes both a dignity of person, Who is *great* enough to attempt it? and a value of obedience, Who can do actions *good* enough to deserve it?

Some people make but a small matter of redemption, as if it was no more than what a creature might perform; but the apostle tells us that οὐδεὶς, no man, no person in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. Rev. v. 3. This shows that the design was too glorious and dazzling for them; for if they could not behold it, much less were they able to unseal it. Upon this, saith the good man, "I wept much." He thought it was heavy tidings; it rendered the whole creation insignificant to him, "because no man was found worthy to open and read the book, neither to look thereon." Those in heaven, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses, David, Samuel, and the prophets, "the spirits of just men made perfect," had as much holiness and capacity as their natures could hold, and yet the book confounded them as well as their brethren who were still in houses of clay. Think of this, if any of you run into the vanity of praying to the saints; there is something needful to your salvation, which all the saints in heaven dare not so much as attempt. But whilst the apostle was all in tears, "one of the elders saith to him, Weep not; for behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." These titles, "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the root of David," plainly refer to his incarnation. He was of the seed of David, according to the flesh, he came of the fruit of his loins; but if that was all, why should not any of the angels have done it as well as he? For it is certain, when he took upon him our nature, he was made "lower than the angels." He no further belonged to the tribe of Judah than as a man, and nothing that he received

from any relations could make him equal to that affair. Supposing, as some tell us, that as the son of David he had a claim to the throne, yet what is that to the opening of a book in heaven, and the great negotiations there? Therefore you will find there is something in the wording of these titles that shows him to be above the tribe of Judah, and the family of David.

Our translation indeed tells us he is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, but that is flat and falls below the majesty of the Greek, for there it is ὁ λεων ὁ ων ἐκ της φυλης Ἰσδα, "the Lion who is of the tribe of Juda." And then again, when he is called "the root of David," it expresses a great deal more than the relation; for if that was all, we may rather say that David was the root of him; but this name shows us that he communicated to David as well as received from him. Though David lived so many ages ago, he derived from a person who came after him. Hence he has both those titles together, which seem to contradict one another, he is "the root and offspring of David;" but they are to be understood in the way that our Lord's question to the Pharisees was to be answered; that "If David in the Spirit called him Lord, how is he then his son?"

It is said of him here, that he "has prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof." Compare these two accounts together. The inquiry was about one who should be *worthy* to do it, the report is of one that has *prevailed* to do it: which shows, as I said before, that there must be a dignity of person in him that undertook it. You see, it is reckoned a great victory, a mighty success, that he has gone through with it. It supposes that an opposition would be made, against which he has prevailed. This combination of the characters tells us, that in so awful an affair Christ is considered both in his majesty and in his merit. As one that prevails to do a thing that was very hard and difficult, he is called a *Lion;* and yet the next view that the apostle takes of him is as a *Lamb.* As a Lion he would be in all the postures

of triumph, but as a Lamb in the midst of the throne, he is like one that has been slain. The sacrifice of a Lamb supposes death, misery, and the lowest condition that can be; the victory of a Lion supposes quite the contrary; and therefore what is said of him in one character looks as if it came to raze out all the other. But here they are consistent, to be an eternal monument in heaven, that the success of our Redeemer was owing both to the greatness of his arm and the misery of his life. As he sustained a character that none other did either in heaven or in earth, so he went through the design for which he was consecrated. He was made a *High-priest* for the atonement of his people; he was a *Captain* of salvation for their dependence; and he has done what was expected from him in both relations, though the one was an extreme to the other. Nothing could be viler and meaner than what he submitted to as a Priest, and nothing nobler and greater than what he transacted as a King.

4. He is further glorified as a Mediator, in that the Father has given him an acquittance, and declared that he did all that was appointed to him. This he was assured of before hand, and therefore at the long distance of a prophecy he says of him, "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth." And again, he says, "Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified." He gives him the name of Israel, which he had given to Jacob, on account of his having power with God and man, and prevailing. So he says in another place, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." And with the same confidence of being accepted does Christ himself speak, "I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength." Isaiah xlii. 1; xlix. 3. 5; lii. 11.

His rewards are put upon his integrity and obedience. "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Psal. xlv.

7, 8. This refers to the reputation that he was received up into. "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces whereby they have made thee glad." It was upon this that he depended in his whole course of duty. "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep" As if he had said, 'this surrender of my life does not only proceed from a love to the sheep, but it is the fulfilment of a covenant with the Father; we know one another; I know what he has commanded, and he will know what I have deserved.' This was "the joy set before him," when he "endured the cross." It is said, that he then "despised the shame." The shame of the cross was very great, not only as a scandalous sort of death, "Cursed is every one who is hanged on a tree;" but as by that means his enemies insulted him, and seemed to do it with reason, "He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him!" Then did they "esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." But all that reproach he did not value, as he says in the prophecy; "The Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed: he is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? who is mine adversary? let him come near unto me: behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me?" Isaiah l. 7—9.

What expressions are here! He seems to challenge his enemies, and dare them to come near, though they crowded about his cross; he talks of God's being near, though he complained of his forsaking him. But all this was true, for he despised the shame of the cross, because of a joy set before him; that is, as it stands in the prophecy, God would justify him, he would plead his reproach. They insinuated that God had forsaken him, but that would soon appear to be false. He used to say, "He that sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." John viii. 29. But now

when he came to die, and seems to want that Divine presence, how shall we know that what he did was pleasing to the Father? Well, *that* he had an evidence of two ways:

First, In the agony of his dying; he felt a Divine approbation then; though the human nature was to suffer under a thicker darkness than that which covered the earth, I mean a withdrawing of the light of God's countenance, yet still as Mediator he had a testimony given him then; and all that whole period of his suffering was filled with the Father's witness to him. When Judas went out to open the tragedy, "Now," saith Jesus, "is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him." The former of these expressions shows what he had, the latter what he did; that in the same moment he received his approbation and discharged his duty. This he said as soon as ever that wretch had left them; and as the time of his death approached, so the joys of his soul increased. When he is upon the brink of the pit, he cries out "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." There never was any moment of his life in which the Father had not glorified the Son. He had all along "the glory of the only begotten of the Father;" and so constantly did the Son glorify the Father, that "in him" saith the Father, "I am always well pleased." But now the hour was come for these mutual glorifications, these exchanges of love and duty to be more abundant. In the hour of his death, as the Son went further in his obedience to the Father, so he received a greater testimony upon his soul from him.

It is true, this is what sinners did not see. The spear could not reach these inward joys, they lay deeper than the place where that went. But it is what the devils felt; though men were unbelievers, they believed and trembled. For in his cross he "spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them." And though mankind saw nothing in his case but a gross and wretched death, yet by that he destroyed "him that

had the power of death, that is, the devil." Thus the acquittance that the Father had given him, and the Divine approbation that he received in his sufferings were plainly seen by the powers of darkness. They cried out, before the centurion said it, "Truly this was the Son of God." But besides this, the acquittance must be legible even to us. There is a way for men to know, that what he did and suffered was approved of; and that is plain from another testimony that God gave him, and every way prepared for our conviction, and that is,

Secondly, His resurrection. This discharged him from all further atonements, and opened the way to his throne. Hence he is said not only to be "delivered for our offences," but "raised again for our justification," Rom. iv. 25. Our justification is in the death of Christ; we are pardoned on the account of what he suffered; it is his blood that cleanses from all sin, and yet here it is put upon his resurrection, not as the price of our acceptance, but as a public evidence to it. And therefore, as the apostle saith, "who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies. Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, or rather is risen again," Rom. viii. 33, 34.

There were to be two glories succeeding his trouble and death; one was, that as a high-priest he should go into the holiest of all to plead the virtue of his blood; and the other, that as a judge he was to render a reward to his enemies, and a recompense to those that hate him. Now his resurrection is an argument of both these; for when he rose again, it was to "enter into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us," be admitted nearer the mercy-seat than any creature can pretend to. When the high-priest went into the holy of holies, he did that which no person upon the face of the earth besides himself was appointed to do. He went thither alone, and that but once a year. Christ is alone in this honour, but in this he differs from the man who was typical of him, that he does not return back again.

"He ever lives to make intercession for us." Whilst he lay in the grave this honour was deferred; nay, whilst he conversed with his disciples these forty days after his passion, he had not ascended to his Father; John xx. 17; but he informed his brethren, that he would "ascend to his Father and their Father, to his God and their God." Thus the Father owned him as a *priest* by his resurrection.

The other honour designed for him, and to be discovered this way, was that of a *Judge*. The apostle tells the Athenians, "God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he has ordained, whereof he has given assurance to all men, in that he has raised him from the dead." His resurrection proclaims the character; by that it appears that he has the power of life and death; the power of the death that he suffered, and the life that he resumed. I am he that liveth and was dead, and I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of eternity and of death. 'As I have gone through this passage, I now control it.' Thus you consider the great Mediator as one approved of God. It was this that he himself valued above his chiefest joy; and this he had not only to the satisfaction of his own soul, but to the confusion of devils, and the conviction of men.

5. Another glory of a Mediator is, that the union between the two natures is now confirmed for ever. He was not a partaker of our flesh and blood merely to serve a turn, to live with it, and die in it, and then lay it aside as a garment that is moth-eaten; no, but though from eternity he was not man, yet to eternity he shall be so. I believe a more comprehensive description was never given of him since the foundation of the world, than you have in the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, in answer to the twenty-first question, "Who is the Redeemer of God's elect? The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was and continues to be God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever."

I am apt to think, a plainer and more copious sentence is not easily to be met with: every word is both open and full; there is not an expression that is either difficult or superfluous. And therefore I will venture to say, that the men who call this a polite age, perhaps in compliment to their own dear selves, may sooner reproach this work than equal it. Here you are told,

1. What this Redeemer of God's elect was antecedent to his design, no less than "the eternal Son of God." 2. You read that he "became man;" the Scripture has given us abundant evidence of both these. 3. That he "was so" quite through his life: nay, 4. That he "continues to be God and man," as much in heaven as upon earth, and yet this without any confusion: for, 5. It is "in two distinct natures;" the Divine never mingles with the human, nor does the human rise into the Divine: and, 6. He is but "one person" in both these natures; the natures are distinct, but not divided: and, 7. Thus he will continue "for ever." That as *by* this union he did his work, and suffered his pains, so *in* that he will possess his glory. We read oftentimes of angels appearing to those who lived under the Old Testament. Whatever those bodies were, perhaps only a little thickened air, yet it is probable they were laid aside when the expedition was over. But as the body of Christ was more solid and penetrable than theirs, so he will always preserve it. Hence we read of the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily; and that because he continues for ever, he has an unchangeable priesthood, Heb. vii. 24.

6. In this union he receives the praises and wonders of the saints and angels. They are to behold his glory, not only that of his reward, but that of his person. There is not any of these mysteries that the world laugh at, which the believer does not wonder at. The Christian and infidel are both amazed that the Son of God should become man; that as God he is a Son without beginning, and as man he is a Son without begetting; in neither of these can any one "declare his generation." Here is the difference be-

tween him that believes and an infidel. The despisers "behold and wonder;" but it is to "perish." This is foolishness to them; they hate the light, they ridicule it, and cry out, not with humility, but with scorn, "How can these things be?" The same question may be put by better people, and so it is, but with a better spirit.

These are "unsearchable riches of Christ;" in them we find the "manifold wisdom of God," πολυποικιλος σοφια, a wisdom that is rolled up, and has laid its design in folds, which must be hid till they come to be opened. This is among the reasons why a believer "groans, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon," because when he is so, then this wisdom which he pries into will be unfolded. This, which is the contempt of sinners, will be the entertainment of saints. "The mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ" is now acknowledged; but then as it will be more seen, so it will be better loved. Unbelievers are then to gnash their teeth in pain as they now do it in scorn. Their indignation at the truth will grow upon them, and become their torment as it is here their crime. They all hated to hear that Christ was God, and then they must hate to feel it. Whilst they who have kept his name shall see his face; and as through faith they have believed the promises, so at the end of that faith they shall go to inherit them.

Angels themselves, who at the time of his birth called him "a Saviour, Christ the Lord;" behold him in both natures. They loved him whilst he lay in the manger; there was "a multitude of the heavenly host" to sing his praises then. And yet at that time the human nature was imperfect, and the Divine obscure. But now he has the complete glory that can be given to a man, and the full manifestation that will be the delight of a God. The *man* Christ Jesus is the highest creature above all things: the *God* Christ Jesus is before all things, and "by him do all things consist;" and in his whole person he is in all things to "have the pre-eminence." There is in him a nature that cannot be adored without idolatry, and yet

there is another, upon the account of which, we read of the same praises given "to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever."

7. Another glory belonging to Christ as Mediator, is the continuance of the mediation; that he, having reconciled us to God, should ever live to introduce us. Our approach to the Divine nature must be through him who took upon him the human. This indeed being the experience of heaven, it is but little that we know of it. But from the Scripture I observe these two things:

First, That this must be in a more familiar way than it is at present. The mediation is not with that distance and compass; "In that day," saith Christ, "ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. And I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from God." John xvi. 23. 26, 27. And yet,

Secondly, That there is to be an eternal mediation seems to be the plain language of the Bible. Whatever nearness we have to the Divine Majesty, though it will be unspeakably more than we can pretend to now, yet it all comes this way. Thus we read of the martyrs that came out of great tribulation, that "they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Therefore, upon the account of that purification, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." But yet it is added, that the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them to living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. vii. 14, 15. 17. As upon our first arrival he presents us "unblamable and unreprovable in his sight," so all our acceptance is still "in the beloved." We may well therefore desire to be "found in his righteousness" here, for we shall be found in no other to eternity. Thus when we read of

a happiness that is to be had in the Divine presence, the care of a Redeemer is joined with it. There is no temple above, "for the Lord God Amighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. The city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God lightens it and the Lamb is the light thereof." Rev. xxi. 22, 23.

(3.) There is another glory which by the Scriptures we are taught to contemplate in our great Redeemer; and that is, what he had independent of his mediation, and antecedent to it. The Lord possessed him in the beginning of his way, before his works of old: he was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. Prov. viii. 22, 23. This, I conceive, is what he speaks of in that moving prayer, "Father, glorify me with thy own self, with the glory that I had with thee before the world was." John xvii. 5. There are three things which may be observed in the language he there uses:

First, That he is a distinct person from the Father. The evangelist tells us, "The word was with God," and here he himself speaks of his being glorified *with* the Father, and refers to a glory that he had *with* him before the world was. This remark is destructive of Sabellianism. Thus he saith in another place, "It is written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me bears witness of me." John viii. 18.

Secondly, You may also take notice, that he had a pre-existence, not only before his coming into the world, but before the very creation of the world. Though he prays to be received into the rewards of a service done in the fulness of time, yet he plainly affirms, that he had not only a being, but a glory "before the world was." This lays flat the whole fabric of Socinianism. And,

Thirdly, It is also evident from these words, that he had a glory independent of any concern about the redemption of his people. He enjoyed it before the world was, and desires to have it again. I do not

find that this will be disputed by those who are enemies to the present truth. They will allow Christ Jesus every thing but his Deity; and therefore, as if they would make a more honourable composition than the Socinians did, they tell us, 'that he was before all worlds, that he had a glory above them; nay, that he was appointed by the Father to make them, that he is the great deputed agent in the creation, and the chief minister of state in providence.' Now this glory that he had with the Father before the world was, must be considered in one of these three explications. Either,

1st, It relates to him as the supreme creature, the first and best work of Omnipotence; and this he prays to be restored to, as what he had been kept out of for some time; so that his petition is no more than to go back again, to sit at the head of angels and saints, being made so much better than they; that his seat had been empty at the King's table; he had obscured the pre-eminence that was given him by creation; he wanted to be gone out of a world, where he lived below the sons of men, and into another, where his throne was set above the stars of God. Or,

2dly, This glory that he had with the Father must be understood of the relative character which he there assumed. He considered himself as ordained before the world to the happiness of his people. He then "rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were amongst the sons of men." Thus he is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." And upon the credit of that obligation which he put himself under, a provision was made for the elect as soon as they sinned, and a happiness was ready for them as soon as they died. And therefore in this sense desiring the glory that he had with the Father, is a petition for the brightening up of his title; that being always known to be a Mediator between God and man, he might now be received as having answered his trust. This to me is a more plausible exposition than the other, and stands fairer to be the sense of the words. But yet,

3dly, I am of opinion that the glory which he speaks of, must be that which he had *in himself* with the Father, and which is to be considered apart from all relations to his people. He applies to the Father, not as the giver of it, but as a partner in it. It is true, every one of the saints above has a glory with the Father; but methinks there is something in the words impatient of being drawn down to a low and common sense. We are said to be glorified *in* God, Christ was glorified *with* him; and that argues no more dependence in the Son, than it does in the Father. He here speaks of that which went before any service or duty. Though he pleads for it, after he had finished the work that was given him to do, yet he esteems it above all the characters of a reward.

If he had been only a creature, and from the highest dignity had come down into the form of a servant, he must have demanded more than he once enjoyed. For supposing an angel had gone through the toil and sorrow that he took upon him, it had been no reward to that angel, that he went back again into his place. There would be no proportion between his suffering of death, and the making him what he was before; for the rule of recompense was, He shall drink of the brook in the way, and therefore shall he lift up the head, Psal. cx. ult. Indeed as a man, Christ Jesus is highly exalted, "crowned with glory and honour, for the suffering of death," Heb. ii. 9.

But this is not the glory that he begged for: this glory he had not before the world was; it was all new to him. It began upon his return to heaven; his body was never there till after the resurrection. When he is said to come down from heaven, it is not to be understood of the human nature. And therefore, though he begs that this may be glorified, yet it is not the thing that he designs in that part of the prayer that is now under our meditation. This had no glory, because it had no being, before the world was. It was not till the fulness of time came, that

"God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law," Gal. iv. 4.

And, if he only pleads to go back into that pre-eminence that he, as the best creature, had above all the rest, I do not see where the reward lies; he could be no higher than he was. Every thing was put under his feet after the resurrection, as man, and so was every thing before, as a superangelical Spirit. So that here is a most grateful obedience to the Father, that has no retribution made to it. But, if you will understand this glory that he has with the Father, of something that declares him equal to the Father, the petition is unincumbered, and stands clear of all the force and danger that other interpretations have thrown it under.

Indeed there is one objection against it, and that is this, that if he begs for a glory that belongs to the Divine nature, he begs for that which he had already. And to this the answer is easy enough, that he does so. And there will be no absurdity in that, if you do but consider that he delivers this prayer in the hearing of his disciples, and therefore only speaks in a supplication, what he had before told them in a doctrine. The great instruction he had given them was that he is in the Father, and the Father in him; and the main revelation of another world is, "in that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." This was a bold assertion, and what ought to be supported with equal proof. Now, to convince them that it was all true, he demands that from the Father, which he had proclaimed to his disciples. He speaks of a glory that he had with Him; and this was indeed uninterrupted; he had it at the time that he desired it; but he uses that petition for the establishment of their faith. It was the same that he did at Lazarus's grave. "I thank thee, that thou hast heard me, and I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou has sent me." And so he says here, "I come unto thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy

fulfilled in themselves," John xi. 42; xvii. 13. If the glory that he had with the Father was only the rank that he possessed in the creation, this was no reward. It cannot be said, that by restoring him to that, God did highly exalt him, and give him a name above every name; because that he might demand, not from his service, but from his nature. But here he speaks of a glory that he had with the Father, as that which could never be exceeded, amended or enlarged. This is what I am now called to lay before you.

His glory as a man is the sample of your happiness; his glory as a Mediator is the means of it; but his glory as a God is the fountain out of which it is supplied. "I give to them," saith he, "eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." This is infinitely above the other two. They were very dazzling, and threw an astonishment into all our pleasures; but in this we are swallowed up. We cannot by searching find out God, we cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection. When we follow a Redeemer as he appears in fashion as a man, and in the form of a servant, there is a limitation upon his character; it is finite and bounded. But when we read that "the word was with *God*, and the word was *God*," we are lost in a nature that has all depth and glory. And yet, thus we are to consider *him*, who was made of a woman, and made under the law. There are "unsearchable riches" in Christ. He is not only "the elect of God, and precious," but one exalted above all blessing and praise.

We do not worship him as a man; in that nature he is only the head of the family, "the first born among many brethren." Nay, we do not worship him as Mediator; for though that supposes him to be God, yet under that notion, it is *by him* that we approach to the Father. He was "fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God,"

1 Pet. i. 20, 21. But yet, a worship, without any rule of abatement, is given to him, and appointed for him. He is the object, as well as the pattern and the medium of our faith, and love, and reverence. "Let all the angels of God worship him," saith the apostle. "Worship him all ye gods," saith the Psalmist, Heb. i. 6. Psal. xcvii. 7. We do not assert this upon the foundation of synods and councils, but in the plain light of revelation. God himself has told us so; and that, not by obscure and uncertain consequences, but in palpable declarations. He that runs may read them. And if this gospel is hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in which the god of this world has blinded the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

I will show you, that the glory of Christ is spoken of in the Bible as the glory of the *great God;* in the same terms, and with the same force and fulness. The Father speaks of the Son, just as he does of himself; and though some vain men will pretend to bound the sense of the words, yet we have no such distinction between a supreme and subordinate God in all the Scriptures. I will show you some things that the Divine nature has always claimed as its own glory, and under every one of these heads you shall see, that it is thus we are to conceive of the great Redeemer; not as a Redeemer, but in his antecedent being. And before I enter into the particulars, I would only give you this note upon the glory of God, that it is taken in a twofold sense:

First, For that perfection which he has in himself, and which he had eternally before there were any to own it. God had a glory, when there were no angels nor saints to give it. His happiness lay in the contemplations of his wisdom. The full object to an infinite mind was an infinite nature. It is a raw and impious notion that some people have published of late, that the name of God is a relative word, and he is only called so with respect to what he has made; a vile undigested fancy, and abominable both to all

revelation, and all the light of nature. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth or the world, from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God," Psal. xc. 2. But it is no wonder, that people are given up to a reprobate mind, that they who deny the Godhead of Christ should be left to debase the Godhead in general. So true is the observation, "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who sent him," John. v. 23. Therefore what the Scripture calls the glory of God, is not always to be understood of the tribute and praises that his creatures give him, but the felicity and fulness of his own nature;—that which he had before there were any to tell him so, and that which he will have, if the whole creation were expunged and reduced to nothing. By the glory of God, therefore, I understand his perfection. "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens!" Psal. viii. 1. And yet,

Secondly. Sometimes this glory of God that we find in Scripture is to be expounded of those acknowledgments that are made from the works of his hands, or those discoveries that arise from what he has done. "The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever; the Lord shall rejoice in his works," Psal. civ. 31. Thus we read that "the heavens declare his glory," and the saints in his temple "speak of his glory." This is done very different ways: the one is the argument, the provocation, and ground of his praises; the other are the people who look upon what he has wrought, and pay him the tribute of it. They consider his heavens the work of his fingers, the moon and the stars that he has ordained, Psal. viii. 3. Now, this glory that he has, either from his works or his people, gives nothing to him. It is only their admiring or showing what he is in himself, by what he has declared to them. So that, showing his glory is but sounding forth the glory that was in him before. And here, when we speak of the glory of the Lord, it is to be understood of that which is peculiar

to himself. We are told of a glory that he "will not give to another." The naming of that which none but a God can have, is properly ascribing him glory. This is talking of his wondrous works, and making mention that his name is exalted.

There are several things which by the Scripture we are taught to believe no creature can share in; God has claimed them as so many prerogatives; that he is a Spirit; that he is infinite in knowledge; that his power is almighty; that his truth endures for ever; that he is holy and good; that he is eternal; that he is the supreme Agent in nature and grace; and that he has a right to the homage of all his creatures. These are so many royalties of the Divine nature, which I shall consider in this order; and there are three things that I would affirm of them all.

1st, It is very true the characters I have now mentioned are bestowed on creatures: they may be spirits, may have great knowledge, power, truth, and some of them will be eternal; they are employed in the works of nature and grace, and a tribute of worship is given to them. This agrees to the language of Scripture; but that ought by no means to take off the force of an argument, because these words in a lower sense may be understood so as to imply nothing of Deity, yet,

2dly, It is by these very terms that God has given us an account of himself. And when he speaks of his own as a glory distinct from the whole creation, it is upon the head of spirituality, knowledge, power, truth, holiness, and eternity. And therefore, if there is not a meaning that these words have, which is incommunicable to a creature, the accounts given us of a God are struck out of the Bible. But certainly there must be something true of him, which is true of no other. Now,

3dly, I will show you, under every one of these particulars, that what the great God claims to himself is given to Christ Jesus: not as man, for so he would have refused it, but as one who is "over all, God blessed for ever." And in doing this my busi-

ness is more adoration than argument; not so much to convince you of a truth, as to lead you into a temper of duty.

1. One glory of the Divine nature is its spirituality: "Thou canst not see my face," saith God to Moses; "for there is no man shall see me, and live." Exodus xxxiii. 20. And yet God says of this good man, "with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold." Num. xii. 8. This our Saviour tells the poor woman of Samaria, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Of this indeed we have very narrow conceptions, not being able to explain the spirit that is within ourselves; but, however, we must remove from it all that is gross and corporeal. And though God has told us of his eyes, and ears, and hands, and feet, yet we are by no means to conceive so heavily of him, as if he was altogether such a one as ourselves; for he has not eyes of flesh, nor does he see as man sees.

I think there is a fatality upon all those who deny the Divinity of our blessed Lord, that they are changing the glory of the incorruptible God into something that is beneath him. In the last age the most notorious enemy to the deity of Christ represented the spirituality of the Divine nature as a metaphysical notion; and in opposition to it, very crudely tells us, that you read of God's remembering and forgetting, and repenting, and coming down from heaven; a plain instance that "to them who are unbelieving nothing is pure, but their mind and conscience are defiled."

And now in our days, one that pursues the same argument, with a vehemence as if he thought himself born to do his utmost against the Godhead of Christ, tells us, that we are not to trouble our heads with God's omnipresence, immensity, and invisibility. But, does he call those acts of faith that regard the Divine perfections, a troubling of our heads? It is indeed receiving a notion that is above us, but it is far from

being any trouble upon the heart of a good man to think that he approaches to one who is every where present. "Blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise." Neh. ix. 5. They may boast of the protestant principle as long as they will, but such talk as this prepares us to be thrown into the sink of popery, and the vilest of all their abominations, which is making to themselves the likeness of the great God.

When God speaks of himself it is thus: "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord. Am I a God afar off, and not a God near at hand? Can any hide himself from my presence?" Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. David was so sensible of it, that he cries out, "Whither shall I go from thy presence, or flee from thy Spirit?" These are "invisible things of him, even his eternal power and Godhead." Christ is "the image of the invisible God." Col. i. 15. The very heathen could say, "He is not far from any one of us." And though the apostle blames the rough idolatry they had run into, yet he mentions a principle agreeable to the voice of nature, that "we ought not to esteem the Godhead like unto gold or silver graven by art or man's device." Acts xvii. 29. Thus says the apostle James, "God is not tempted with evil;" so that though we read of tempting the Holy One of Israel, and his being grieved with our iniquities, yet you must not understand these passages in a way inconsistent with his eternal happiness. And though there are threatenings and rewards in which he shows his resentment and his pleasure, yet we are taught thus to speak of God: "That a man cannot be profitable to him; it is no pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous, and no gain to him if thou makest thy ways perfect." Thus are we then to conceive of the great God, as a Spirit eternally above all the passions and confusions that come into our nature. Such a Being, that the spirits of just men made perfect, and the very angels themselves cover their faces in his presence. The heavens are not clean in his sight.

Now inquire whether this does not agree to what

is said of Christ Jesus in the holy Scriptures. That as a *man* these characters do not belong to him is plain enough. He bids them handle and see him, because a spirit had not flesh and bones as they saw him to have. So that it would be in vain to search out any of these glories for the human nature. He could not be truly a man, if he was only a spirit. But had he not a being that was invisible? Does not the Scripture speak of him under these adorations? The Redeemer is one whom Job calls by the name of God. Job xix. 25, 26. I think there are two passages that must be understood of him, unless we violate all the laws of connection.

The one is, 1 Tim. i. 16. "For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Christ Jesus might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them that should believe on him to life everlasting." Here Christ Jesus is considered, first, As the Author of the apostle's regeneration; and, secondly, As showing all long-suffering. It is the name of the Lord that he proclaimed "long-suffering and gracious." Thirdly, He is represented as the object of faith; people in all ages are to believe *on him;* and, fourthly, The fountain of happiness, for they believe on him "to everlasting life." Now when he had declared Christ Jesus so much his friend for what is past, and what is to come, it is the fairest way of expounding, to suppose that the next words pursue the same subject, and that he does not start from one person to another. "Now," saith he, "to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be glory for ever and ever. Amen." That Christ as Mediator was not eternal, and that he will not in that character be immortal, is plain enough, for he must give up the kingdom to the Father, and it is equally true, that he is not invisible. But as the adversaries of his Divinity now grant that he had a nature above that which might be seen, which was born and did die, so these words may be understood of that. These passages can belong to none but the person whom he had spoken of before; and is it too much to have it said

of one, who showed all long-suffering, and who is believed on to eternal life, that he is "the King eternal?" Are not the titles proportioned to the account? What is said of him is but equal to what is done by him. It is He whom Moses saw, as the glorious invisible. Heb. xi. 27.

The other passage is in the same epistle, chap. vi. 15, 16. He had charged Timothy to "keep the commandment to the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which (i. e. which appearing,) "in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see, to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen." These are said to be ἰδιοι καιροι, "his own times," though we know that "the Father has put the times and seasons in his own power." The thing that is to be shown at the appearing of Christ is something that the world would not believe; therefore he tells us, there are times of showing it. And what is that he discovers? A person who is "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." This is plainly affirmed of Christ, as his public and displayed character. "He has on his vesture and his thigh a name written, the King of kings, and Lord of lords," Rev. xix. 16. Why should we think a title too much for him in one place, which can be understood of no one else in another? That the Father is "the King of kings, and Lord of lords," was an uncontested doctrine; there was no need of making that appear; but that which in his own time he would show, was the very thing that men denied him. If it should be said, he might have this as a man, it is true enough, for he is to rule in the very nature that suffered. But then from that account he passes on to another, that must be understood of a Divine nature, that "he only has immortality, and dwells in that light to which none can approach, whom no man has seen nor can see." This is still affirmed, without any transition to another person, of him who is

the blessed and only Potentate, who elsewhere is called "the Prince of the kings of the earth," Rev. i. 5.

That he was seen upon earth is not to be denied, but you find here is an invisible part; and thus he speaks of himself, even in the days of his flesh, as alone equal to a mutual contemplation with the Father; "Not that any man has seen the Father, save he that is of God, he has seen the Father," John vi. 46. He speaks here of a privilege that no creature ever had; he was alone in it. Now what but an infinite nature could behold an infinite nature? The eye must be equal to the object. The seeing of God is too much for any but Christ; and, which completes the argument, the seeing of Christ was too much for any but God. "No man," says he, "knows who the Son is, but the Father, and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him," Mat. xi. 27. It is plain, these words are to be taken in an eminent sense, for several knew the Son, and it is here supposed that many knew the Father, to whom the Son revealed him; but that cannot be the meaning; there was something in his wonderful person, which required an infinite mind to comprehend. None knew him but the Father.

To this glory of the Divine nature does he give a testimony to Philip, whose desire was delivered in these words, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus answers, "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father, and henceforth ye have known him and seen him," John xiv. 7. He does not in this contradict what he had said before, that "no man hath seen God at any time," but he declares himself so united to the Father, that "he who had seen him, had seen the Father." Not merely in the effects of his grace and power; "Believest thou not, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; the words that I speak, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."

2. Another character that the great God has taken to himself, which yet the Scripture numbers among

the glories of Jesus Christ is, that he is infinite in knowledge. "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counsellor? Or who has first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and to him, and through him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen," Rom. xi. 33—36.

This observation the Holy Spirit has carried quite through the lively oracles; and it became him to fill his own book with these accounts of a Divine wisdom that will distinguish him from every other author. For he speaks of an infinite nature as no one else can do, because he "searches all things, yea the deep things of God." "Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, or who has taught him?" Thus we read that "he made the earth by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his understanding." He is admired in the works of his hands, because in wisdom he made them all. We are taught to conceive of this attribute with the deepest veneration and wonder. "Great is our Lord, and of great power, yea his understanding is infinite." Thus we read of him as a Creator; and in the work of redemption we are to say, "To God only wise, be glory for ever."

With this reverence and godly fear do his people approach to him. Job had gone so far in giving his opinion about the wonders of nature and providence, that the Almighty tells him out of the whirlwind, he was "darkening counsel by words without wisdom." This laid him under the rebuke of his own conscience, and made him cry out, "I know that thou canst do every thing, and no counsel can be withholden from thee. I have uttered things that I understood not, things too wonderful for me, that I knew not." Here is a confession both of his own emptiness and the Divine knowledge. And to this agrees the language of all good people ever since men began "to call upon the name of the Lord." For as there never was any religion without the duty of prayer, so it is

always supposed that we go to one who is able to hear us. This perfection of the Divine nature is what we can neither deny nor multiply. It must be owned in the great God, and cannot be given to any creature. For "he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God," Rom. viii. 27. We frequently meet with one example of Omniscience, that it is "he who searches the heart, and tries the reins of the children of men," Jer. xvii. 10. Peter speaks of this as a Divine title: "God who knows the hearts, bare them witness," Acts. xvi. 8.

Now the question is, whether we do not read of this very perfection in our great Redeemer without any abatement of language? Are not the same things, with an equal fulness of words, ascribed to him that are spread through the Bible as the glory of the Father? We read of a Lord "who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts." And in another place, that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." 1 Cor. iv. 5; 2 Cor. v. 10. Let us only compare spiritual things with spiritual; set the distant parts of Scripture in the same light; look at them together, and observe if either the Spirit of God has made any difference or left it to the humour and pride of men to make any. If there is room for a distinction between a supreme and subordinate God, an original and a derived Omniscience, in the Bible, we will own, receive, and adore it; but if there is not, if the characters of the Father and Son are laid down with equal forms of speech, how bold must it be for persons of a finite nature to employ their fancies in setting bounds to what is infinite!

The objections that are brought against our Lord's complete knowledge may be allowed without any damage to his glory as God. It is very true, that "he grew in wisdom," which supposes an imperfection, and that he confesses, there was an hour which neither men, nor angels, nor the Son himself could

tell, but only the Father, Luke ii. 52. This agrees to the weakness and limitation of the nature that he took upon him, and shows that he "was in all points made like to his brethren." Heb. ii. 17. He himself was "compassed with infirmities." But that is the wildest way of arguing in the world, to bring in the characters of one nature as an objection against the prerogatives of another, to prove that he is not God, because he is man; and to confront what is said in some places about his infinite perfections, by those accounts that we have in others of his infirmity and trouble. If this must pass for reasoning, we may go and dash the several parts of the Bible against one another. As, for example, suppose we meet with this argument, as it is well known we often do—'he that grew in knowledge, he that knew not the hour or the day of judgment, could not be omniscient; but the Redeemer of the world confessed this, and therefore he is not omniscient,'—it is an unfair insinuation. The people that run on with such talk, are throwing a veil over that distinction of natures which was always affirmed: and therefore the question is not, whether we may not, and must not consider this High Priest of our profession in a state of weakness and limitation? that is never denied; but the whole debate hinges upon this, whether the Scripture has given us any foundation to think and speak of him as we do of the Most High God? Are there any passages that ascribe to him an unbounded wisdom? Is he ever called "the searcher of hearts?" And, in particular, is he ever represented as knowing that day and hour which he tells us, as "the Son of man" he did not know? Let us fairly inquire into this, and just speak as we find.

Now the former of them is what the Scripture abounds in. "In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," Col. ii. 3. Very early in his ministry he did not commit himself to man, because "he knew what was in man." He said to the disciples, "have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil." John ii. 24, 25; vi. 70. 64. "For," saith

the historian, "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." Certainly these things are not spoken of that nature concerning which we read, that he came to the fig tree if haply he might find fruit, and was disappointed. We must not be so far imposed on as to believe, that he who could not tell the growth of a tree, should be able to see the workings of men's hearts at the distance of several years. There is nothing in human nature that could make him capable of knowing the thoughts of their hearts when they reasoned within themselves, much less of foreseeing an apostasy so far off, and calling a man a devil for what he was to do some years after, at a time that he made the full profession of a saint. The prophets had things revealed to them on particular occasions, but never did any of them pretend to give accounts of mankind beforehand at their own pleasure. They were often deceived as well as others. And the apostles, who had the discerning of spirits, could not by that be secure from false brethren who crept in unawares. No person ever used such language as Christ did upon these occasions.

Peter speaks to him as a God, though he spake to Peter as a man. "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" The good man does not answer to inform him, but makes a profession, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." Had he gone no further than this, we might have supposed that he meant no more than that he had given evidence enough in his whole life of an affection to Christ and his cause. But you see he puts it upon something else. "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." What could he have said more of a God? What is the difference between Job's confession, "I know that no counsel can be withholden from thee," and this of Peter? Our Lord's enemies owned him to be a teacher come from God, and saw God was with him, but they could not go this length. They took him for a wonderful person, but ascribing to him

the knowledge of all things must have been condemned for blasphemy.

How vain is it to confront such a passage as this with the compliment of the woman of Tekoah to David, "My Lord is wise as an angel of God, to know all things that are done in the earth!" Is there any comparison between the flattery of a deceitful person, who was hired to be the tool of a hungry courtier, and that of an apostle in his conversation with one who had been dead and was then alive? I shall not entertain a suspicion so rude as to think you need to be told the difference between these two cases; and only mention it to show you how low that cause must run, that can serve itself by these profane and vain babblings.

Solomon, in his dedication of the temple, had as awful thoughts of the Divine perfection as a man could be filled with, and in the warmth of his devotion uses these words, "Thou, even thou *only*, knowest the hearts of all the children of men." From whence it appeared to be his opinion, that as God looked into the heart, so none but HE could do it. This was an incommunicable glory; how then are we to conceive of what the great Redeemer saith, "All the churches shall know that I am HE that searches the hearts and tries the reins, and I will render to every man according to his works?" Rev. ii. 23. Are all the churches to know, that omniscience is a perfection transferred, a glory that God gives to another? that what Solomon thought God had alone, is now an attribute possessed in partnership?

The religion of the Old Testament, we see, took a great deal of care to speak of God with language that was used of no creature either in heaven or earth; and has the gospel thrown down this inclosure, and put the Maker of all things upon a level with the work of his hands? It is said that "hell and destruction are before the Lord;" Prov. xv. 11; and of Christ, that "there is not any creature that is not manifest in his sight, for all things are naked and open to the eyes of *him* with whom we have to do," Heb. iv. 13.

But to come to the other instance, our Lord's not knowing the day of judgment. That he confessed this, is true enough; we understand it of his human nature, that he there spake as a man. Now, the question is, whether there be any other places of Scripture upon which we may say, that he was possessed of this secret? He tells the disciples, that those times and seasons are what the Father kept in his own power; Acts i. 7; he would have them conceive of it as the grand reserve of the throne; and yet are we not to think and say the same of Him, who will, ἰδιοις καιροις, "in his own times," show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, 1 Tim. vi. 15.

Is not this frequently called the day of Christ? We read of "the day of the Lord," in which he is to be revealed. And the Scripture has in a promiscuous way used the words, calling it either the day of *the Lord*, or the day of *Christ*, both of which are to be understood of that day and hour that the angels know not; so that really if we are not to look upon Christ as this Lord, and the proprietor of this great day, we could have wished that the Holy Spirit had been more distinct. Compare but a few passages together.

2 Thess. ii. 1, 2.—The apostle had told them in the former chapter, that Christ Jesus was to be "revealed from heaven with *his* mighty angels." He uses this as a compellation, beseeching them "by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him;" and yet that he understands one of these sentences of his last coming, is plain; for he bids them "not be shaken in mind, nor troubled, as that the day of Christ is at hand." Had he meant a spiritual day, those greater affections of grace, and light, and love, that we are waiting for, this could be no matter of trouble to them. But "the day of Christ" here is the same which Peter calls "the day of the Lord," and which shall come "as a thief in the night," 2 Pet. iii. 10. This is the same comparison that our Saviour uses to one of the churches in Asia, "Behold I come as a thief," Rev. iii. 3.

Now, is it not evident, that what one apostle calls "the day of Christ," and another "the day of the Lord," is not to be understood of two days? and a man must be a great master of his own resolution, and grown to be evidence-proof, if he says they are speaking of two Lords. I am sensible some will indulge themselves in a secret boast, that this does not come up to an argument—that none denies Christ to be this Lord; but if you look down two verses further, you will find that it is called "the day of GOD;" and the description is the very same, almost in a literal repetition, as if the Holy Ghost had done it on purpose to confound the gainsayers of our day.

In 2 Pet. iii. 10, we have this account of the day of Christ, that "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat;" and no lower down than the 12th, we are said to be "looking for, and hasting to the coming of *the day of God*, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." These passages are very near together, but we must not call them a vain repetition; it is not in vain to show that the day of *Christ* is the day of *God*, and to let us see, that though this day is what none knew, no not the Son himself as man, though it is the time that the Father has reserved in his own power, yet we are to have such a consideration of Christ, as to call it his day. And surely the consequence is not very far fetched, that a day within his government, must be a day within his notice. It is He in whom we have believed, and are persuaded that he is able to keep what we have committed to him against *that day*, 2 Tim. i. 12.

It would have been robbery for him to claim to be equal with God in this glory, if he was not so in nature. To invade the Father's great reserve, is against all our notions of his being a righteous servant, and his not coming to do his own will—if there was not another character that belonged to him. We are sure that "he knows all things, and needs not that any man should ask him," John xvi. 30.

3. I pass on to another attribute of the Divine nature, and that is omnipotence. There is nothing but what he knows, there is nothing but what he can do. He has a mighty arm; strong is his hand, and high is his right hand. Making the whole creation so well, doing it by his word, and upholding it by his providence, are public arguments of an infinite Majesty. When he told Job out of the whirlwind the great things he had done in distributing heaven, earth, and sea, to their several bounds, "Lord," saith that good man, "I know that thou canst do every thing."

It is thus that he argues against the unbelief of his servants, "Is there any thing too hard for God?" He calls that sin by a name that shows it to be scandalous; it is a limiting the Holy One of Israel. Our faith is "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Abraham, who is the great example of it upon record, reasons thus, "He was fully persuaded that what God had promised he was able to perform," because he believed that God, "who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not as though they were," Rom. iv. 21. I will go no further into the vast field that the Scripture has given us, as a proof that God will be known by his Almighty power, but shall at once enter into the argument, that these very things are said of Christ. "Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness; their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst. I clothe the heavens with blackness, and make sackcloth their covering," Isa. l. 2—5. That it is Christ who speaks, you will be convinced by the next words. "The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them

that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting."

Thus he delivers himself in language suitable to both his natures. The whole glory of omnipotence is ascribed to him. That we here read of him in a state of weakness, as feeble and sore broken by the disquietness of his heart, cannot be denied. There was no room to call *him* Almighty, who was grieved, and tired, and fainting, and crucified. He was executed in weakness as to the body of his flesh. But let us inquire fairly, whether He who came of the seed of David is not "over all, God blessed for ever." Though we have "the book of the generations of Jesus Christ, who was the son of David and the son of Abraham;" yet let us examine if the Scripture has not set him in such a light, as that "none can declare his generation."

You will see a chain of argument and adoration in the xl. chapter of Isaiah. He begins with these words, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Here he speaks, either of the Jews, or of believers, in every kindred, and tongue, and nation, as his people, and he is their God. The comfort they have is by his direction. "I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will heal him," Isa. lvii. 19. Will they ever own themselves to be the people of one that is not God? or can they bear the thoughts of giving this name to one who is only subordinate? No; they had none in heaven but him, and none upon earth that they could desire besides him. And yet, from this proclamation, he passes into the great historical article of a believer's comfort, and that is the arrival of the Messiah. He describes the ministry of John the Baptist, as "the voice of one crying in the wilderness;" and what does he cry? does he use deceitful words that are not to be understood without a distinction, several hundred years after the prophet was dead? The thing itself that he delivers is this, "Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make strait in the desert a high way for our GOD."

Is not He, whom he calls "our God" in this verse, the same whom he had mentioned under the title of "your God" in the first? Thus did Zacharias apprehend the birth of his son. The angel told him, that "many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the LORD THEIR GOD, and he shall go before Him," i. e. before the Lord their God, "in the spirit and power of Elias," Luke i. 16, 17. When John was born, the Spirit came upon his father; he was "filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, Thou child shalt be called The Prophet of the HIGHEST, for thou shalt go before the face of the LORD to prepare HIS ways." Who is this that is called *the Highest?* We have the word in another part of the same chapter; the angel said to the Virgin Mary, "The power of the *Highest* shall come upon thee." Now the question is, Whether the word, in one of these places, signifies a person that is not the highest? Will it not be as gross a contradiction as any you ever heard, to talk of a subordinate supreme—of one that is the highest, and yet has another infinitely above him?

Could the Holy Spirit find no words when he was speaking of a creature, but such as so confound our imaginations both of him and of the great God, that we cannot distinguish one from another? The sense of the word *Most High*, in the Old Testament, is so very plain, that we are in no temptation to fix it upon any but One: and it is the way to make us think the gospel is the snare that shall come upon all the earth, if it has not set the same bounds to the Divine nature that the law did to the ark.

But, to return to the xl. of Isaiah. The passage I have already given you refers to the coming of Christ, the entrance upon his own ministry. From that the prophet goes on to the work of the apostles, and those that should succeed them in the preaching of the gospel. "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain. O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid." What is it they are to tell with so much courage and diffusion? "Say

to the cities of Judah, Behold your GOD!" This is the third time we have the expression. He that comforted Jerusalem is "your God," he for whom John the Baptist prepared the way, is "our God," and he is mentioned to the cities of Judah as "their God." To them first, "God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless them. They were the children of the prophets, and of the covenant made with Abraham;" and he is called "their God." From them this word sounded abroad to the ends of the earth, that this "Lord God will come with a strong hand, his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." And lest any one should think that the prophet had got his thoughts above a Redeemer, when he uses these expressions, without any pause, he descends into his more familiar character, that "he shall feed his flock like a shepherd, and gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young."

Shall we lose a Saviour out of this verse, rather than admit him into the other? Will any deny him to be our shepherd, that he may not be owned as our God? Is it not more desirable to keep what God has joined together? Are we offended that he who gathers the lambs with his arm, should have an arm to rule for him? Shall we take pains to contract his majesty for the sake of his love, and argue, that because he is a shepherd, he cannot be a God? What a wilful thing is unbelief!

It is the same person whom the prophet goes on to speak of, that he "has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. It is he who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in." Can these words, "It is *he*," be understood of any but him whom he had spoken of before? Nay, let me add

what the prophet does in the next words, and which may refer to the enemies of his doctrine and Divinity, "They shall not be planted, they shall not be sown, yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth, and *he* shall blow upon them." And, lest any should rush in upon the argument with the foolish talk, that he is a God by the donation and grant of one that was above him, he confounds the vain thought with this question, "To whom will ye liken me, or shall I be equal, saith the Holy One?" When he had spoken of him as a preacher of righteousness, as coming into the deserts of Judah, and there called him the Lord *our God;* when he had considered him as declared in the ministry of the apostles, as one presented to the cities of Judah, under the title of *their God;* when he proclaimed him as the Lord of Providence, coming with his strong hand, he speaks of him as the great Creator. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; *he* calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that *he* is strong in power; not one faileth." This is the very thing that the Psalmist enters among the perfections of God, that "he telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names." And upon the whole, the prophet makes this application, "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment passed over from my God?"

Can this be called a transition to any other than he had been speaking of quite through the chapter? No, surely. With what does he encourage their faith in a Redeemer, but with the same argument that the apostle uses many ages after, viz. that our faith is "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might?" "Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding." Now, lay all these things together; see whether the exposition is forced; and judge upon the whole, with what truth we are told, that Christ is called God only by a grant and

participation from another; that we must not look upon him as the Supreme: that is in one word, we are no better than heathen, who do service to them that "by nature are no gods;" for, if he whom either we or they worship is not a God by nature, the religion that is paid to him is idolatry.

From this Scripture that gives you an account of our Lord's omnipotence in the Old Testament, I will lead you to another in the New. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty," Rev. i. 8. The argument why the title of *Almighty* should not be understood of the Son in this verse, is because it is joined to those characters that plainly belong to the Father in the fourth: "Grace be to you, and peace, from him who was, and who is, and who is to come, and from Jesus who is the faithful witness." But I cannot think this a fair conclusion, because the same title is undeniably given to the Son in the eleventh verse, which has a nearer situation to the fifth than the fourth has. The apostle says, "I heard behind me a great noise as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." Can we think he speaks of the Father as the Most High God, under such a description as would afterwards be claimed by a creature? If one, who is not God, says of himself, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending," then these words which are supposed to be the distinction of the Deity do not answer the end.

Christ is usually spoken of throughout the whole book; it is his revelation that he gave to his servant John. The Father is never brought in as speaking; our Lord claims it to himself; "He that testifieth these things, saith, Behold I come quickly," Rev. xxii. 20. And who was this? you will find, first, by what he says of himself, verse 13. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." And then, by the reply the church makes to him, "Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus." This book represents his government in the world, and therefore

we must not dare to exclude him from those praises. "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned," Rev. xi. 17. Nor are these titles to be separated; "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are all thy ways, thou King of saints." The voices of the multitude in the heaven, and the mighty thunderings are directed to him under this name, "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

4. We all along read of the great God, that his *truth* endures for ever. "He is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent. The Strength of Israel will not lie or repent, for he is not a man that he should repent." I need not lead you into a great number of Scriptures that give a testimony to this perfection in the Supreme nature. Both the Old and New Testament are crowded with them. What I shall fix upon, under this head, you will have in these two particulars: 1st, That eternal *truth* conveys to us the notion that we ought to entertain of God; it is thus we are to think of him: and, 2dly, That this attribute, with equal fulness of words, with the same undistinguished phrase, comes in among the characters of Christ Jesus. In his majesty he rides prosperously, because of *truth;* he loves righteousness, and hates wickedness. His mouth shall speak *truth;* wickedness is an abomination to his lips; all the words of his mouth are in righteousness, Psal. xlv. 4. 7; Prov. viii. 7, 8.

The former of these is what the enemies of our Lord rather choose to stick at than the latter. They give the argument this turn, that it is possible a person may have all that is affirmed of Christ as to his truth and integrity, and yet be no more than a creature. They that are with him in heaven are "true and faithful," and this title ought to comprehend all the churches upon earth. It is the imperfection and scandal of our societies, that men "speak lies in hypocrisy;" and it will be a happy, though a very

severe reformation, when "the remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies, neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouths." Whether such a purifying of the sons of Levi happens in our day or not, yet we hope our next look, and our next remove, will be to a place where nothing enters "that defileth or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." Rev. xxi. 27. All the armies that follow the Lamb "are called, chosen and faithful." The hundred forty and four thousand that attend him upon Mount Sion, are not only distinguished by his Father's name in their foreheads, but by something that lies more within, "They are without fault before the throne of God." Rev. xiv. 5.

Thus much then we must own, that the mere character of truth is so far from being peculiar to God, that it ought to belong to every creature, and will be found in the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven. But I do not see how that is any defence against the argument I am upon; for though truth is one of the communicable perfections, and what God imparts among the works of his own hands, yet it is plain, with an evidence above that of the sun at noon-day, that under this head he speaks of himself. And therefore if the word can signify no more than what may be affirmed of a creature, it is wrong placed among the names of the Deity.

To what purpose does Moses leave the Jews a song for their anniversary devotion, in which he introduces the titles of his God with great solemnity? "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak, and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth; because I will publish the name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness to our God." Deut. xxxii. 1. 3. Would not any one expect, after such an appeal to heaven and earth, that what he calls "the name of the Lord" is to be understood of something above all the shares that man can have in it? and yet he says no more than what may be affirmed of every saint in heaven, according to the methods of interpretation which some use when any

thing is said of Christ. "He is the Rock; his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." It is evident that the character of *truth*, in which he ascribes "greatness" to the Lord, must be numbered among the perfections of the Divine nature.

We read of him elsewhere, that he is "the true God, and an everlasting King." Jer. x. 10. Nebuchadnezzar, when he issued his proclamation, that all nations should "honour the King of heaven," gives this reason for it, because "all his works are truth, and his ways judgment." Dan. iv. 37. Thus was he adored in the faith of his people. Abraham therefore believed, but it was "before Him who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things that are not, as though they were;" and "against hope he believed in hope," judging "Him faithful who had promised." This was giving glory to God, which is a name that the action could never bear, if it did not signify a dependence upon him for that which no other has, and a confidence in him that we dare not place upon the best and highest of all creatures.

Now it is thus that the Scripture has spoken of Christ Jesus, and left us no directions to read his character with a drawback. I need not be afraid to say the same things of him that I do of the Father, when the Holy Spirit has done so before me. If I find the names given with an equality, I must endeavour to preserve it, however inconceivable it may be to a corrupt and a contracted mind. Thus, when Christ tells us, he is "the way, the truth, and the life," I cannot but imagine, though in those words he declares himself to be a Mediator, yet there is something in them that carries our thoughts a great deal further. He is *the way*, because no man comes to the Father but by him; that name plainly signifies his office. But how is he *the truth?* Not merely as grace and truth came by him; not because he published it to the world, for then all faithful ministers may be called "the truth." Certainly, as it would be too much for us to call ourselves the truth and the

life, because we make a declaration of both; so such an interpretation of the words is too little for him.

If he is not equal to the Father would it not have been better, more modest in him, and more secure for his people, had he not used a word with so much freedom, by which the great God has so often revealed himself? Is it not an unhappy snare to his disciples and all the ages of his people, to tell them, that as they "believe in God," he would have them also "believe in him;" and immediately after such an exhortation, speak of himself as the Scripture has always spoken of God? As he had claimed an equal faith, he lays hold on an equal title. The distinction that we make in the sense of these expressions can never be safe, unless we had an easy direction to it in the words themselves.

How well did he keep his distance in that prayer, "Father, let this cup pass from me; yet not as I will, but as thou wilt." Any one may see that he is there to be considered as an inferior to the Father; and what a small matter in other places would have prevented any person's saying that they are equal! Could he not have hinted to his disciples, that he called for no more than a subordinate faith to a subordinate God? that though he bid them believe in him as they believed in God, yet he meant it only in a lower way? and though he is "the truth and the life," yet he is not the fountain of life? Did not he know how mankind are apt to worship and glorify the creature as they do the Creator? and is it likely he would have given the directions so loose and unguarded as he has done, and instead of opening the difference between himself and the Most High, leave the matter more entangled and obscure? "If ye had known me," said he, "ye should have known my Father also, and henceforth ye have both known him and seen him. He that has seen me has seen the Father; I am in the Father, and the Father in me." John xiv. 7. 9, 10. Who could imagine that the Scripture had the least design to encourage the thoughts of a distinction in

nature between the Father and the Son, where every Divine title is given to them in common?

What! have we no *peculiar* name for our God in all his Book? Has he no words that belong to himself? Is there an infinite difference between him and the Mediator with respect to his being and perfection, and has the Holy Spirit found out no expressions to show it? It is his work to glorify Christ, and how does he do it, but in the way that our Lord has informed us of? "He shall take of mine and show it unto you." What is that? "All things that the Father hath are mine, therefore," with reference to that fulness of the Deity, "I said, he shall take of mine and show it unto you." John xvi. 14, 15.

I can easily accommodate that title to Christ in his lower nature, that he is "the faithful witness;" but methinks it sounds a great deal more in other places. "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth." So again, "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness." Rev. iii. 7. 16. Can we go any higher in speaking of him whose "mercy is in the heavens and whose faithfulness reacheth to the clouds?" Psal. xxxvi. 5.

When we say, "who is a strong Lord like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee?" would not any one think it was an adoration; that it could not be given to a creature without falsehood and blasphemy? And yet this is the song of the Lamb, "just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints," Rev. xv. 3. He that sits upon the white horse is called "faithful and true; in righteousness does he judge and make war." Who is this? "He is clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God," Rev. xix. 11. 13. We read of a salvation in Christ Jesus, and then it is added, "if we deny him, he also will deny us; he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself," 2 Tim. ii. 13. It is just the same that is said of God, that "he cannot lie," Tit. i. 2.

The religion of the heathen taught the doctrine of a supreme and subordinate God better than ours does. The titles they gave, the devotions they offered, were plainly distinguished. They spake one way of Him whom they reckoned to be *Pater hominumque deûmque*, "Father of men and of gods," and with more diminution of their inferior deities. But our Bible is a mere heap of confusion according to the Arian argument. We have an account of the supreme God, who, they say, is no other than the person of the Father. We are also led to consider the Son as infinitely below him, and yet there is not one title, attribute, or glory, mentioned of the former, but what is equally given to the latter. Were ever people so unhappy as Christians are? We must make a distinction, and yet the book we go by has not taught us how to express it. Thus, "the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true." Yet he saith the same of himself that he does of the Father; for "we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ; this is the true God, and eternal life," 1 John v. 20.

5. Holiness and goodness are other attributes of the Divine nature, and proper characters under which we are to conceive of a God. The objection that this is liable to, is the same with what we have cleared off under the former head; the same answer will do, that though these are qualifications found among creatures, yet there is a sense that limits them to the Divine nature.

The great God is so holy and good as no other being ever was, or ever will be. "There is none holy as the Lord, for there is none beside thee," 1 Sam. ii. 2. He delighted in that name, "The Holy One of Israel." "Thou art holy," saith Christ himself, "O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel," Psal. xxii. 3. In the days of his flesh he renounced this title as a man, "why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God." Certainly there was no harm in calling him "good master;" it is a name that we may use lawfully to any serious per-

son, especially one who teaches the way of God in truth: but our Lord would tell the young man, that *goodness* was a Divine attribute, and is among the titles that belong to God.

Now examine whether the Scripture has set any bounds to this in the account that we have of Christ Jesus. It is a doctrine that the devils owned. "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." This is above the scorn of a profane wit; for as the apostle says, "thou believest there is one God, thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble." But besides, it is what the angel said, "that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." This is more than could be said of John the Baptist, though he was to be "filled with the Holy Ghost" from his mother's womb. But antecedent to Christ's sanctification as a man, he is called the *holy thing*, because the Holy Ghost would overshadow his mother, and the power of the highest come upon her, which are words that confound us; they strike our minds with an awe, for they are all the description we shall ever have of a thing we shall never know. Thus do they speak of him. "Against thy *holy* child Jesus, were they gathered together;" and, "let signs and wonders be done by the name of thy *holy* child Jesus," Acts iv. 27. 30. Certainly this account signifies a great deal more than the purity of the human nature; for the people of Israel appeared not against that, but his pretensions to the Divine nature. Ananias tells Saul, "the God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that *Just One*, and hear the voice of his mouth." It is the same title that Peter had used before to the Jews; "Ye denied the *Holy One*, and the *Just*, and desired a murderer to be granted to you." You may indeed pull down these majestic names, and make them signify no more than they would have done, had they been given to a creature. But will not a common reader be amazed when you tell him, that the Holy Spirit who speaks here as he used to do of a God, does not mean one?

Let us inquire into the adorations of heaven. "Behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne; he that sat was to look upon like a jasper, and a sardine stone," Rev. iv. 2, 3. Let any one now tell me, whether it is most proper to understand this of a God manifest in the flesh, or of the Father, "whom no man has seen or can see?" You read afterwards of "four beasts," which might have been translated more decently, as it is in the prophecy of Ezekiel, "four living creatures." It is said of them, that "they rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come; and they give glory, and honour, and thanks to Him who sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Is there any thing in this, which the Scripture has not in other places given to Jesus Christ? We often read of him, that he "was, and is, and he is to come;" and though some will tell us, that it is too much to call him "Lord God Almighty," yet Thomas could say, "My Lord, and my God." And we know, that he sits upon the throne, and makes all things new, Rev. xxi. 5. And he has created all things. "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist," Col. i. 16, 17. And whether we have any ground to say, that the angels give him the repeated adorations of "Holy, holy, holy," let us inquire into the Scriptures. The most remarkable place where we meet with that abounding manner of praise, cannot be understood of any other besides him. It is, Isa. vi. 1—3. "The Lord sat upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims, and one cried unto another, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." His train filling the tem-

ple, and the whole earth being full of his glory, are plain intimations to whom these titles belong. When the prophet saw "the King, the Lord of Hosts," we think it most likely that he meant that King who should be born to David; nor was the retinue and pomp with which he appeared too much for the Messiah, for he had angels always to attend him, both out of heaven and into it; both at his birth, when he took our nature on, and at his ascension, when he took it up.

But we are not left to guess and suppose, and beg our way into an interpretation. The Holy Ghost himself is our expositor. The Evangelist John tells us, "These things said Esaias when he saw his glory and spake of him," John xii. 41. Saw whose glory? His whom the Pharisees would not confess though they believed him, "lest they should be put out of the synagogue." Excommunication was to them more dreadful than infidelity. Was it the Father whom they were thus afraid of owning? No certainly, every one knows who it is they would not confess, and this is the very Person whom Esaias spake of; and at the time he did it, he "saw his glory;" the angels appeared to be employed in such a manner as they never used to any but the great God, crying, "Holy, holy, holy."

Cannot they worship a God either in earth or in heaven with titles that are incommunicable? It was a crime in Lucifer to set his throne as the throne of God, and to be like the Most High: and will our blessed Saviour suffer his people to approach him as if he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, when it certainly must be the vilest of all robberies? Are we by the direction of the Scripture to speak to him in such a manner, that we cannot possibly outdo it or go beyond it in our applications to the Father? Has he not only the same titles, but the same repetitions of them? How proper would it have been for him to check the angels as he did the young man in the gospel, 'Why call ye me holy, there is none holy as the Lord, for there is none besides him? Do

not confound your respect to me with the language of that devotion which is due to him alone.' Had any such caution as this been revealed, it might have instructed two worlds at once. But let angels and men go on in their old way, honouring the Son even as they honour the Father; and though some among us call it idolatry, as indeed it is, if he is a creature, yet we see it obtains in the temple above, which has no fellowship with idols.

Some vain men give us distinctions that show the authors to be puffed up in their fleshly minds, and intruding into things which they have not seen. We know no more of heaven than what is told us in the Bible, and that has made no difference between the praises, the blessing, the power and glory that are given to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever. And " who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? From whence are people instructed to tell us, that these adorations are chiefly given to him that sits on the throne, and only in a lower degree to the Lamb? Those persons know nothing what worship means, who suppose it is to be directed in different degrees to different objects. We are to worship none but God, nor is any part of our homage to be withheld from him, as a sort of second service to another. You must love the Lord your God with all your hearts, with all your minds, with all your strength, and with all your soul, not merely with the chief of these powers and affections; and him only should you serve. The love we have for men and angels, and the worship we are said to pay them, is not of the same kind with that we give to God, nor has it the least degree of religious adoration in it. Our worship, taking it for an act of devotion, is not given to the highest angel, nay, not to the Son himself in our nature, but merely as he is God; and therefore this distinction teaches to talk about worship in the way that the Scripture abominates.

I have again exceeded my own design by an enlargement that swells and grows upon me. I had thought to have gone through the other characters

that belong to the Divine nature, but that I could not without going faster over these things than is agreeable to the importance of the subject. And I hope none will think discourses concerning Christ Jesus too long. This doctrine being the riches of heaven, what angels desire to look into, may justly be the perfume of our assemblies on earth, for "his name is as ointment poured forth."

6. Another glory of the Divine nature, and under which we are taught to conceive of God, is the *eternity* of his being. He is the King eternal, immortal, invisible; he only has immortality. 1 Tim. i. 17; vi. 16. It is in vain for any to shun the argument, by telling us, that the terms of *everlasting*, and being *for ever*, and several others of the like sound, are often to be taken in a limited sense. Thus the covenant of God with the Jews is said to be "for ever;" their possession of Canaan, their ceremonial worship, are mentioned under these majestic words; and yet we know that the former is dissolved by the wrath of Providence, and the latter by the light of the gospel. This is all true, but not to the purpose of those that urge it; for the question is not, whether some things that are called eternal were not at last to perish, but whether or no there is not such a meaning in those titles as can be applied to none but the Most High God.

You know we always distinguish between a twofold eternity; by one we mean that which had no beginning, by the other that which has no end. The title in the latter sense is given to a vast multitude of persons and things. Angels and the souls of men are created for an unchangeable duration. We also read of an "everlasting righteousness," because it shall be ever pleaded in heaven; and "an everlasting covenant" which shall maintain its character and virtue when the visible creation is all gone. Under this head we may bring in the "eternal life," that contains and supplies the happiness of God's people; and that house not made with hands is "eternal in the heavens," where they are to enjoy it, and shall

be "ever with the Lord." Nay, it is as true that the torment of those who shall be condemned is "for ever and ever;" the wicked are to go into "everlasting punishment;" as they dwell with devouring fire, so it is with "everlasting burnings." These and several other particulars are distinguished in the Scriptures from the visible world, for "the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal." But none of these are comprehended in the full and proper sense of the word *eternity;* that is, though they are to have no end, yet every one of them had a beginning. Once they were not, and it is by the appointment of another that they both are and shall be.

This *complete* eternity, as we may call it, is peculiar to God, and we speak both of him and to him in those terms that can be used of no creature, when we say, "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." Psal. xc. 2. That which always had an existence can be no other than the Supreme Being. Both the light of nature, and the revelation of Scripture, give us this as an incontestible truth; "That ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am He; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me; I, even I am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour." Isa. xliii. 10. So again, upon this head he exposes the folly of idolaters; "Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. xlvi. 9, 10. Here he proclaims an existence which was alone with himself, and he mentions that as the foundation of his independent counsels.

It would be a fraudulent usage of this, and the like places, to assault them in the way that is taken with several others, and tell us, that these words "in the beginning" do not signify any thing that had no beginning; for either the Holy Ghost has in such phrases given us the eternity of God, or he has not mentioned

it at all, and so has left us nothing about that which is the first principle in nature. When we read of an "eternal purpose," that he had in himself before the world was, it is not to be debased and plundered; we are to look upon it as a resolution taken, not only before our world was made, but laid in the mind of him who had all being within himself.

Here let us inquire whether this is not a glory that the Holy Scripture has given to Christ Jesus in language that is easy enough to be understood. We read of Melchisedec, as a type of him, that he had "neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like the Son of God, abideth a priest continually." Heb. vii. 3. What the Bible tells us of the Son's eternity is liable to no other objection than may as well be brought against the Father's. Does not the Psalmist write of the Most High God? does he not declare the name of the Lord, of JEHOVAH, "when the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord?" He says, "O my God, thy years are throughout all generations; of old thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands: they shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years have no end." Psal. cii. 22—27. This is with very little alteration of the words applied to Christ; "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." Heb. i. 10—12.

We read that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the same was in the beginning with God." John i. 1, 2. The Socinian interpretation of that passage was this, 'that in the beginning of the gospel, Jesus Christ was; he was then with God, i. e. employed by him; and he was God by donation and appointment to the office

of Mediator." They believed no more of him than the persons did who crucified him, that he was "a man approved of God by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of the Jews, as they themselves also knew."

But though the word of the Lord is forever, yet errors grow old, and the opinions of men who have risen up against Divine revelation change and vary with the humours of ages. This exposition is now as much decried by those who will not allow the Divinity of Christ, as it is by those that maintain it; and so it will fare with their opinion; as much as it is now in vogue, with a few years, gray hairs will appear here and there upon it. It will be no longer admired than whilst it is a new scheme; and as time itself shall eat out that character, so that which decays and grows old is ready to vanish away. Whilst the truth of God is still the same; like a rock in the sea, though it is dashed with waves of all sorts, and brushed with winds from all quarters, yet it remains unmoved. The opposition that is made to it varies just as Satan finds it needful to change hands, but the doctrine itself is still the same that it ever was, and ever will be.

We have no other term of communion or ground of Christian concord than every generation of God's people had before us. This was the only "unity of the Spirit," and the only "bond of peace" seventeen hundred years ago, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life; for the Life was manifested, and we have seen it and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal Life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us," 1 John i. 1—3. What he calls eternal Life, is to be understood of a Person, and not of a thing; of one who was manifested, whom they saw with their eyes, whom they looked upon, and their hands handled; which cannot without a violence upon language be applied to the future glory; because that is not seen, for it

"does not appear what we shall be." He here speaks of one who was born in time. The Life, as he saith, was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness; but then antecedent to such a discovery, this eternal Life was with the Father. As in his Gospel he called him *the Word*, so here he calls him *the Life;* and upon the preaching of this doctrine were all their societies founded; as he goes on to tell them, "that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." A fellowship without such a declaration is what the beloved disciple knew nothing of; and the reason is plain, because it was "a fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." And it is only if "we walk in the light as he is in the light," that "we can have fellowship one with another."

The objection that is brought against this testimony is like a sword in a madman's hand, that cuts his own flesh; it strikes as much at the error they maintain, as it does at the truth they oppose. We are told that these words, "In the beginning was the Word," do not prove the eternity of a person any more than the first verse in Genesis proves the eternity of the creation, when it is said, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth;" and that the expression in both places must take its sense and force from the things that are spoken of. In the one Moses gives us an account of the world, in the other the Evangelist writes of the Gospel.

This may be pleaded by a Socinian, but it comes ill from the mouth of an Arian; for these own that the Son of God had an existence before all worlds, and they bring this very Scripture to prove it. Now if the words refer to a being that he had before his incarnation, they may with as much propriety signify the same that they do when applied to a God; and if his being with God may be understood of a Person that is limited and derived, I cannot see why an Atheist may not take the same liberty with the phrase when it is spoken of the Father, that others do when it gives us an account of the Son; for we are expressly told,

that "all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made; in him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Consider what the Apostle tells us, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Compare this with what we are told of "the Father of lights," that with him "there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning," Heb. xiii. 8; James i. 17. We are directed to be as clear and fixed as possible in this article by the following words; "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines." It is the same expression that another writer uses, when he describes those who are departed from the faith, they are "clouds without water, carried about of winds." These doctrines that are divers from one another, and strange to the people of God, we are to keep our ground against; and you will judge what they are by their opposition to that great truth he had laid down before; "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." If this is applied to the human nature, the proposition is false, for that submitted to great variations; he was dead and is alive; and if you refer it to his mediation, that also is not unchangeable; for there is a time when the Son himself shall be subject, i. e. declared in a most public manner to be so, and shall then "give up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all, and in all." The kingdom that the Apostle there speaks of cannot be the same with what the angel mentions to the Virgin Mary, "He shall rule over the house of Jacob for ever and ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end," Luke i. 33. In one place the kingdom is to be given up, and in the other, there is to be no end of the kingdom; with respect to the former, Jesus is not the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and therefore if we are not to conceive of him in a character higher than his mediation, these Scriptures cannot be owned with truth; for to say that his being the same for ever, may signify that he continues for ever some way or other, is trifling both with words and things; or to say, that *for ever* signifies a long time, to the end of the visible creation, is

such an insult both upon language and the mystery it belongs to, as proclaims a man to be void of fear:—such foolish and unlearned questions only gender strifes. Suppose I should say of the Father of lights, who is "without any variableness or shadow of turning," that he is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," would not all mankind take the terms to be equivalent? or can any exceptions be made to the latter, that would not have the same force against the former?

When an author tells us, 'that Christ cannot be unchangeable, because he was born, he died, he rose again, and went to heaven,' does not such a one virtually say, this Scripture is to be razed out. May we not plead as much against his being the same for ever, as against his being without any variableness? Indeed if there was any pretence for using this text as they do that 1 John v. 7, it would have diverted the dispute, and then we must not have argued about the meaning, but the authority of a single verse; not what it said, but whence it came; just as a man who cannot answer the charge of an indictment, demurs to the jurisdiction of the court. This confronting of copies is much easier work than answering of reasons; but here is a text in full force, we find it in a chapter that is ungarbled, and what shall we do with that?

Nay, to this I may add a multitude of other places. Thus Christ tells us himself under the title of Wisdom, that the Lord possessed him in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old; he was set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was; when there was no depth, he was brought forth, Prov. viii. 22—24. I am sensible that these expressions of being "set up," and "brought forth," will be catched at as an abatement to the truth that I am contending for; but I will leave you to consider what the criticism would end in, if it was applied to another text that I have already given you, which certainly stands for a declaration of God's eternity;—that, Isa. xliii. "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be

after me." Suppose we should use this phrase, 'the forming of a God,' as they do the other, I believe you would tremble at the gross produce of such an argument.

Again you read, Out of Bethlehem Ephratah "shall he come forth to me, that is to be a ruler in Israel," Mic. v. 2. This is easily to be understood of a natural birth, and a spiritual kingdom. But then it is said of Him who is thus to be born, that "his goings forth have been of old from everlasting." Some late authors are impatient when we distinguish between two natures in the Person of Christ Jesus, though you often read of him thus, in one and the same verse. His coming out of Bethlehem cannot be that going forth that is mentioned afterwards; nor would a King that was then future, be said to be "of old," and "from everlasting."

If it is objected that the word "from everlasting," does not always signify a proper eternity, I believe it may be sooner said than proved. And till I meet with a passage in Scripture, where that which had a beginning is said to be "from everlasting," I must take that opinion to be no more than the storm of a terrible one, which, for all its sound, is only a blast against a wall. I durst no more set bounds to that expression, "His goings forth have been from everlasting," than to the other, "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." I am not one of those that pretend to declare his generation. The Spirit who "searches the deep things of God" has given us the titles of Father and Son in the same language; and I am sure, that the spirits who tell us of a distinction between them, and will adjust the value of words, have made no such searches as these are. Let us therefore speak as those who have received, "not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God," 1 Cor. ii. 12.

7. The Great God takes pleasure to be known as the chief Agent in all the works of nature and grace. "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things;

to whom be glory for ever, Amen." Thus the harmonious inhabitants of heaven are singing to him, "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." And believers upon earth can say, "Our God is the God of salvation." "In his hand are the deep places of the earth, the strength of the hills is his also: the sea is his, and he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand," Psal. lxviii. 20; xcv. 4—7.

To suppose that the Most High made the Son to be an agent in the creation, and the Spirit to have the management of our redemption, and that the Divine nature was not immediately employed in either, is a scheme that I shall take in pieces hereafter, and let you see that it is dishonourable to the Father, as well as to the Son and Spirit, and brings in the old heathen notion of an inactive God, only frothed up with the nonsense of two omnipotent creatures. Such folly as this must never be charged upon the Holy Scriptures: it is indeed talking without book; I am sure, without *that Book*. At present I will confine myself to the point that I gave you in laying down the head, that it is the character of the Deity to be chief agent both in nature and grace. God has always mentioned this as his peculiar attribute. "The heavens are the work of his hands, the moon and the stars he has ordained." We can go no higher in our notions of him, than that it is he "for whom are all things, and by whom are all things," Heb. ii. 10. They are for him as the great end, and by him as the chief cause. Now, it is said of the Son, that "all things were created by him and for him," Col. i. 16. What is the difference between these two texts? Why must *by him* in one place signify only an instrument, and in the other a Supreme Agent? and why must *for him* in one Scripture declare a subordinate, and in the other an ultimate end? If God had designed this distinction for the use of his churches, he could easily

have given it. I am sure, they that talk against the use of human words in Divine things, are forced to contradict themselves; for without the barbarous terms of a 'subordinate Deity,' a derived, dependent, and 'originated Godhead,' it is impossible to drive in their notion. There must be a great noise of axes and hammers in the building of their temple, much lifting up of those tools that pollute God's altar. If these are not words that man's wisdom teaches, I know not what it is to spoil men with "philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. Col. ii. 8.

Supposing we were to have a catechism in Scripture language, which that party have so long demanded, what would they get by it? Is it not easy to drive them out of these beloved measures? As, for example, if the first question is this, 'What is your opinion of the Great God?' you cannot answer better, than that it is "he for whom are all things, and by whom are all things:" or, that "he has created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created." If the next question be, 'Who is that Jesus in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins?' The Scripture has taught us to say, that it is he "by whom all things were created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." And does not such a text teach us to answer the question we find in another, "Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding." If you should ask again, 'Who is our God?' we cannot answer in better words, than that "our God is the God of salvation." And if you follow this with another question, 'Who is that Jesus whom we look to?' we may say, "the author and finisher of our faith," or, "the author of

eternal salvation to as many as obey him; neither is there salvation in any other."

Is it by any human decision, or remote and uncertain consequences; do we depart from express words of Scripture, when we say, that Christ is equal with God in the works of nature and grace? Say we these things as men, or saith the gospel the same also? What! shall a God be known to be the "God of salvation," and shall a creature be the author of that salvation? Shall they in heaven adore the great God for his having created all things, and shall the things they admire him for be the work of another? When will vain words have an end, or how long will they darken the counsels of God by words without knowledge!

If they tell us that God created these things, both in nature and in grace, by Christ as his instrument, why should that instrument take to himself the glory of a chief agent, and speak of his own performance in royal language, in the same words that are used by the Supreme Efficient? "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith, or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?" Must there be any room for such a complaint in the laying of our salvation? What care did our blessed Saviour take to talk like one who came down into a lower nature! When he speaks as man, he tells us plainly, that "the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do."

And why should not all the account we have of him be thus guarded? for, when he saith, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work;" that he "gives eternal life," though we know that eternal life is "the gift of God;" that he is "the author of faith," though faith is "the operation of God;" that he is "the finisher" of it, though "he that has wrought us for the self-same thing is God;" that he "gives life, and gives it more abundantly," though "it is God who works in us both to will and to do;"—how is it possible that these Scriptures should be matched to one

another, without supposing an equality between the Father and the Son? "There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all." And yet Christ is "over all, God blessed for ever," and "Christ liveth in us." "Christ is in us as our hope of glory."

We must deny these things to be peculiar to the Deity, though they are always represented so, if one who by nature is no God, can be capable of doing them. There is no need to say with David, "Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any works like unto thy works." Psal. lxxxvi. 8. For here is one like to him, with a nature infinitely below him, and there are works like his works. The very greatest and best works that ever God has done, creation, providence, and redemption, are ascribed to one who is not his equal. So that, though God does not give his glory to another, yet, according to the new scheme, we must give that glory to another. We are told of the God of all grace, who has called us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, that he will make us perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle us. Now, this is no more than that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ should be with us, for he is of power to stablish us. 1 Pet. v. 10; Rom. xvi. 24, 25.

8. The last thing that I shall observe in the character of a God is, that he has a right to the *homage* of all his creatures. All things are made for him that were made by him; and especially in that business that is called Religion, it is all directed to Him. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." The laws of devotion he has distributed among angels and saints. When these come into the same place, they shall with the greatest perfection of their natures be employed in the same work. And though we do not act as we shall do in heaven, yet we have but one object of our reverence and godly fear. There is none in heaven whom we have but him, and none upon earth whom we desire besides him. "Hear, O Israel," saith he in the opening of his law, "the Lord our God is one Lord." Deut. vi.

4. He puts this in the front of his commandments, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." Now, the greater that deity is that we make to ourselves, the more it engages his jealousy. We cannot better account for it, to worship an angel than an ox that eateth grass; but the former will be more resented by a jealous God, than the latter. And if the Son and Spirit are but creatures, our adoration of them is still more provoking to the Divine jealousy. The greater the rival is, the worse must our error be that makes him so.

But has the Most High God expressed himself with any fear, that we should exceed in our homage to the Son and Spirit? Are we so guarded, contracted, and held in, upon our devotions to them, as we are to the angels? Have either of these Persons in the eternal Trinity said to any of us, "See thou do it not, but worship thou God?" No; we find that our blessed Saviour, who blamed the young man that knew not his Divinity for falling down before him, takes all the connected praises that are given him both in heaven and earth. He sits in the temple of God, and gives out himself to be God. And this would be as bad in him, if he was only a representative Deity, as it is in the man of sin, who calls himself a representative Saviour. He has set his throne as the Most High.

Sometimes you have Him that sits on the throne distinguished from the Lamb in title only, but not in praises. And lest you should think this argues two different natures, how often do you read in the same book, that there is a Lamb in the midst of the throne, and that he sits down with the Father upon his throne? Surely those people that will illustrate the mediation of our Lord, by Joseph's ministry in Egypt, have forgot that though Pharaoh made a prodigious grant, yet he gave this closure to the whole, "In the throne I will be greater than thou." But we have no such saving clause as this in what is said of Christ; so far from it, that "to the Son," the Father

(not the Psalmist, but the Father) saith, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Heb. i. 8.

His establishment in the office of Messiah would never entitle him to any more than a subordinate glory. He is not to be worshipped upon that account if he had not a prior claim. But this is the mind of infinite wisdom; such things are done that all men may honour the Son as they honour the Father. Nor could it be said upon any other foundation than that of an equality, "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who hath sent him." John v. 23.

[2.] Having in these particulars given you some account of what the glory of our Redeemer is, I am in the next place to consider the manner of his coming by it; and the words of my text tell us, that this is what he was *received* into. You will soon apprehend that this expression is to be opened with the same variety that we have observed in the others. Our Saviour's being received, is as different as the glory that belongs to him. For if the word be applied to what he carries his human nature into, it must be understood of that which by no means can be said of him either as Mediator, or as God over all blessed for ever. And yet as the text led us to consider all his glory in the several parts of his character, so his being received into it may be distributed under the same heads; that is,

1. We shall inquire what is meant by this receiving into glory, conferred upon him as he is *man*.

2. How it belongs to him as *Mediator*.

3. In what sense it may be said of him, as he is "the mighty God, and the everlasting Father." As different as these names and titles are, the Scripture has concentrated them all in him. Nor can we lose any of them without a waste of that doctrine that has hitherto nourished us up, and in which we ought to abound with thanksgiving. For though our great concern lies with him as Mediator, yet denying either of his natures is destroying the offices that he sustains in them both.

1. When it said he is received into glory, if this is to be understood of the human nature, there are several things that may have their interpretation that way. We read that a cloud received him out of the apostles' sight; that angels attended him all along, from his resurrection to the place of his reward; that he is fixed in heaven, never to remove out of it, till he comes to judge the world, and fetch up the bodies of those that sleep in the dust; and that the Father has pronounced the great sentence of honour, and given him a name above every name. These things relate to the manner of his being *received* in our nature, and therefore fall short of that upon which he claims the adoration of his people; and in going over them, we may observe the hope that is set before us; for in these respects he is "the first fruits of them that sleep," and a pattern to all his followers. The man Christ Jesus is thus exalted as "the first born among many brethren:" they that serve him as God, are to follow him as he is man; and where he is, there shall his servants be. "He that raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus." Rom. viii. 29; 2 Cor. iv. 14.

(1.) I begin with that which the Scripture has taken notice of, that a cloud received him out of the sight of those that were gazing after him, Acts i. 9. This being no more than a very general circumstance, I enter first upon that, before we come to the other things that were of greater importance to his glory. Thus you read the grand event that closed up all his conversation with the disciples, that it came to pass whilst he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven, Luke xxiv. 1. As in that blessing he opened heaven to them, so the same moment it was opened to him.

The historian in another book speaks of the day in which he was taken up, and afterwards he describes the manner of it, that when he had spoken these things, whilst they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight, Acts i. 2. 9, 10. "They looked," as it is added, "steadfastly

towards heaven," as he went up; partly to see him as long as they could, to follow the moving glory; and partly to give the world an account in what way he will come again, which as the angels who stood by them in shining garments reported, would be "in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven;" that is, in a visible way. "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him," Rev. i. 7. And though this intimates his lower nature as a man, yet it is among those things that in other places give out the majesty of a God. Thus we read of him that he is "very great;" and it appears in this, that "he maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind," Psal. civ. 2, 3. And again, the church prays, "O that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down!" Though these expressions signify the greatness of God, yet neither of them relates to a matter so important, as that upon which our Saviour was to be revealed; I mean, to judge the world. "Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne," Psal. xcvii. 2.

The martyr Stephen had a sample of this, when he saw the heaven opened. How that was done is no more to be explained than the vision that he had within them, "Jesus standing at the right hand of God." The opening of the heavens, the unfolding of those "everlasting doors," is what we never saw; nor do I suppose that any of the crowd about Stephen could be witnesses to it. His eye was strengthened to see that, because afterwards it was to see no more in this world. However, this agrees to the accounts that we have of a Redeemer. Thus we read of his accession to the reward. "I saw in the night-visions, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven; and came to the ancient of days, and there was given dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages, should serve him." Dan. vii. 13, 14. This coming in the clouds of heaven answers to what David says; "He made darkness his secret

place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies." Psal. xviii. 11.

Thus will Christ be revealed as a judge; and when he so comes, it is "in the glory of his Father." "The powers of heaven shall be shaken, and then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Mat. xvi. 27; Luke xxi. 26, 27. The gates of that palace are to fly open, and the Lord to "descend with a shout." He shall issue out of the cloud, just as he entered into it, with a joyful noise. In the creation God set the firmament in the midst of the waters, and it divided the waters that were above it from those that were below it. This is represented as a body of prodigious firmness, as Elihu saith, "Hast thou with him spread the sky, which is strong, and as a molten looking-glass?" Now this gave way in a manner that we cannot account for when our Saviour went back to heaven. There are two improvements we should make of this noble circumstance in his being received up to glory:

First, That we will stick close to his doctrine, not give up any part of the honour that belongs to him. "He that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son." 2 John 9. The apostle himself has led us into this inference. "Seeing we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens," through one heaven into another, "Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Heb. iv. 14. An indolence about the truth, or a cowardice in maintaining it, is a virtual reproach upon one that is gone away with so much pomp. His piercing the clouds, his entering the heavens, is an argument for us to hold fast our profession, and not be either wheedled or bullied out of it. For though this is said of him as a man, yet according to his own reasoning, it supposes another nature; for "no man hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven." John iii. 13. As a man, he had not ascended into heaven at the

time that he said it, and as the Son of man, he was not in heaven, nor in that character did he come down from heaven. But he speaks of his going thither, and being there, even whilst he was upon earth; which no one could say but he who had declared before, "do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."

If we hold fast our profession in this article, we shall scarce be persuaded to let it go at the pull of a whiffling criticism upon those words, "the Son of man who *is* in heaven;" that because the expression signifies in another place, "who *was* in heaven," therefore it must do so in this. He must have a loose hold of his faith indeed, who parts with it so easily; and puts a force upon a word which shall make nonsense of the whole verse, For if the phrase "who is in heaven" signifies "who was in heaven," it tells us no more than we had in the former sentence, that he "came down from heaven." Is there any necessity when I say I came from a place, to tell you that I have been there? does not my coming thence suppose all that? But it is plain, our Saviour was to convince Nicodemus of his Divine perfections, and therefore he talks to him of his ascending into heaven, which cannot be understood of his resurrection. But to take off his surprise, he affirms again, that even at that time he was in heaven. As it had been observed before, that "the only begotten Son is in the bosom of the Father," whilst he declared him upon earth. He was "in the Father, and the Father in him." "Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee." John i. 18; xiv. 10; xvii. 21. And though this Jesus is now set at nought, and the profession we make of him is slurred by some and lampooned by others, yet let us hold it fast, from the consideration that we do it in the cause of one who has "passed into the heavens."

Secondly, This takes off all the objection of unbelief against our following him. We are ready to say, "How can he judge through the dark cloud?" And it is a more difficult question, 'How shall we pass through it, when we are taken out of the graves?'

Indeed how it will be we know not; but he that opened the heavens for himself, can find a way thither for our bodies as well as his own. They who are alive at the coming of the Lord, and they who sleep in Jesus, shall be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, when they go to be ever with the Lord; wherefore comfort one another with these words.

(2.) Another thing included in his being received up into glory is the attendance of the angels. This reaches from his grave to his throne. One of them came with great power, and rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre. Matt. xxviii. 2. 7. Two of them staid behind, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain, to tell his disciples what had happened. As they had made the keepers like dead men, they struck a new life into his followers, bidding them not fear, because the Lord was risen indeed. And though we do not read much of them during his forty days' converse with the disciples, yet when he was to go away, the same multitude of the heavenly host went with him up, who came with him down.

How mean soever his abode in the world might be, yet his coming into it, and going out of it, had the magnificence of heaven. This was all along foretold, not only as a reward to the human nature, but as a testimony to the Divine. For we read that "the chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels." Psal. lxviii. 17, 18. As the title of *God* shows us to whom these angels paid their homage, so when they are called his chariots, it refers to some particular season in which they gave their attendance. And you read in the next words when that was, "Thou hast ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive." It is in vain to wrest this last expression from an application to our Saviour, and to that very period that I am now speaking of. The apostle, by repeating the whole passage, has fixed this sense upon it. And they must be hard put to it who will say, that the chariots belong to one, and ascend-

ing up on high is the act of another. He who ascended is our Saviour, and He who was the owner of these chariots is the Most High God.

The angels loved his human nature as the best servant to the Divine; but yet it was to a God appearing and manifesting himself in that nature that they paid this eminent duty. As a man, the angels had a charge concerning him, that in their hands they might bear him up; but as a God, he was not worshipped as though he needed any thing; for angels, principalities, and powers, being created by him, were created for him. In all things, and over all persons, he has the pre-eminence.

This shows us what good hands we are put into. As all the angels of God, upon his resurrection, are called to worship him, so they are sent forth as ministering spirits to those who are the heirs of salvation. Upon the road they help them on, and at the end they help them up. It is said of Lazarus, that "he was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Luke xvi. 22. And they who have done so much for our souls, will wait for the day of fetching up our bodies. For the Son of man shall come with his angels to sever the wicked from among the just, and to gather out of his kingdom those that offend and commit iniquity, to fetch out of the graves those that are sleeping there, and rebuild the dust into bodies. This we are assured of from what they did to our blessed Lord. As they received him, so they are to receive us; for their love is under the same rule with ours. "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also who is begotten of him."

(3.) His being received into heaven must be understood of an abode there. The Lord said unto this our Lord, "Sit thou at my right hand." Psal. cx. 1. That expression signifies both the greatness and the duration of the dignity: therefore we read, that "when he had by himself purged away our sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb. i. 3.

The doctrine of transubstantiation is folly to our

senses, and blasphemy to our faith; it is impossible, both in nature and religion, that the body of Jesus should be any where but in heaven. He is to come no more upon earth, till he comes to judge it. All the stories of his appearing in cloisters, and upon mountains, to some favourite saints, make the Christian religion as ridiculous as the fables of Jupiter and Mercury did that of the Heathen. When he carried his body up to heaven, it was to stay there, not to be wanting one moment from the throne. We have no more occasion for it upon earth, till the time of the restitution of all things. The believer, who knows what he talks of, does not desire to see Jesus in the flesh upon a visit to us here below. He is not in heaven as the angels are, the messengers between two worlds, always going and coming; no, but "he is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," Heb. ix. 24. The disciples saw him no more. The Apostle Paul, who saw Christ Jesus the Lord, did not see him come down upon earth, but only looking down from heaven. His descending to live here a thousand years in person, is a scheme so little revealed in the Scriptures, that the admirers of it are forced to seek out many inventions.

I know of no season in which he will come upon earth, but when he comes to burn up that earth, and suffer it to be no more. When the earth has given up her dead, there is an end of it. It is first to be opened, and then to be consumed by the glory of the Lord. For when he sits upon the great white throne, from his face both the earth and the heaven will flee away, and there shall be no more place for them, Rev. xx. 11. When he went to Him that sent him, he had finished the work that was given him to do; and therefore saith, "I am no more in the world."

Those many declarations that he makes of a continual presence with his people, cannot be understood of his human nature, without a violence both to Scripture and reason. Though we know him no more after the flesh, yet he manifests himself to us. Though he is far above all heavens in place as well as dignity,

yet he is in the midst of two or three who are met together in his name. Though he has left us and is gone away, nevertheless he is with us to the end of the world. As to his body, it is no where else but before the throne of God; but there is no fleeing from his presence, or going from his Spirit.

Here is a twofold comfort for his faithful servants. *First*, That they trust in One who is every where: they may in all places call upon the name of the Lord Jesus. Let any persons try how they can manage the notion of an omnipresent creature, that is both limited and infinite. And, *secondly*, notwithstanding this, it is our joy that we have a Saviour who is confined to one place. In that nature which he took from us, and took for us, he is a perpetual inhabitant of heaven.

In this he is our example; thus it is to be with us. "Him that overcometh," saith he, "will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out," Rev. iii. 12. Indeed we do not go thither with our full nature all at once, as he did. We are carried off by parts. But, first, the soul is taken up to stand before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and He that sits upon the throne will dwell among us, Rev. vii. 15. And, secondly, when the time of the dead comes, then shall our bodies be raised up once for all; not to stay out another life upon earth, or look back to the places where once they lived, as Lot's wife did, but to be caught up at once; ἁρπαγησομεθα, "we shall be snatched away," and move with speed as well as glory, to be ever with the Lord.

(4.) Christ's being received into glory, as a man, signifies the Father's pronouncing the sentence of reward upon him. He was a righteous servant, he glorified the Father upon earth, and finished the work that was given him to do, John xvii. 4. For this they could appeal to the Jews. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God among you, by signs, and miracles, and wonders, which God did by him in the

midst of you, as ye yourselves also know," Acts ii. 22. He "became obedient to death, even the death of the cross; and therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii. 8—11.

Here are two things plainly to be observed in that Scripture. First, a dignity conferred upon a suffering nature. This is exalted with a happiness that it had not before. But, secondly, this is all along considered as united to one who is really God; because here is a mention of those glories that are understood to be peculiar to a Divine nature: as, in particular, that at his name every knee should bow, both in heaven and in earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, or that Jesus is JEHOVAH, as the words would have run had they been expressed in the Hebrew language. It is true, the bowing of the knee, and confessing of a delegated empire, might have been given to a creature, if God had not reserved it to himself; yet it is now too late to suppose that it ever shall or can be so, when he has said, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear; surely, shall one say, in the Lord, (in JEHOVAH,) have I righteousness and strength." Isa. xlv. 23, 24.

What! shall the great God with all that solemnity challenge this bowing of the knee to himself in the Old Testament, and does he give up his glory to another in the New? To say, that this is "to the glory of God the Father," does not abate, but confirm the argument; for that either denotes an equality of nature, or otherwise it is a consideration of no force. It is not to the glory of God the Father, that what he always called his own, should by a transfer be given to one who is infinitely below him. And therefore, we have both these expressions united in another place. "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat

of Christ; *for* it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." Rom. xiv. 10, 12. Its being written that every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess to God, is no argument at all that Christ has the judgment seat, if he himself is not that God. But the apostle, who reasons thus, concludes upon the whole, "So *then* every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." Standing before the judgment-seat is the same with giving an account—that judgment-seat is Christ's—that account is to be given to God. And though he will come to judgment in the human nature, yet his capacity for it supposes a Divine. As a man he must have the highest place, and be above the angels; but it is only as a God that he searches the hearts, and renders to every one according to his works; for God is judge of all. It is only as God that he bestows eternal life, for eternal life is the gift of God. As God he calls us out of our graves, for it is God who quickens the dead. It is only as God that he can answer the dependence of all his people, for our faith and hope must be in God.

Thus have I considered his being received into glory, as that was a reward to the human nature; and I hope it is not in vain, that I have endeavoured to keep in your view the belief of a Divine nature. For as it was that which made the human always pleasing to the Father, as it was that which made the death of the human an acceptable sacrifice, so this is the greatest article of glory to it, that "the fulness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily."

2. I have formerly shown you, that he has a glory as *Mediator*. Now, his being received into that, gives us quite another manner of thinking. For though this supposes him to be the man Christ Jesus, yet in every notion of his mediatorial character, we must of necessity look upon him as God; there is no leaving out either of the natures. We can think and speak of him distinctly as a man, we can also tell what is peculiar to him as God, but as Mediator we must take in both. Now, he is received into this

glory, 1. As the Father owns him in a union of both natures; 2 As the angels recognise him in this comprehensive character; 3. As he himself declares his resolution to continue both God and man for ever; 4. As all his proceedings in nature, grace and providence are with this mysterious union.

(1.) He was received by the Father into the glory of the *Mediator*, as he is owned in this union of both natures. As he was the Father's delight, brought up with him, and rejoicing always before him, so he could be considered only as a God. The glory that he had with the Father before the world was, is no other than the glory of the Divine nature; but now upon his ascending into heaven, here is a new state of the case.

The question is, Whether he must not lay down the nature he so lately took up, in order to continue this fellowship that he had with the Father before the foundation of the world? This is so far from being a condition, that the Lord said unto our Lord, "Sit thou at my right hand." By which he proclaims, that the person of the Son is the same since he became a man that it ever was before. The Father acts in communion with him as he always had done. "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion." It is "the rod of *thy* strength," and yet the Lord shall send it out. "Rule *thou* in the midst of *thine* enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." It is sometimes called *his*, and sometimes *thine;* for the appellation seems to change in these words, "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath," Psal. cx. 2—5. Here one would think the Son speaks to the Father, as before the Father plainly does to the Son.

Now the apostle argues from this very instance, that he can be no creature. "To which of the angels said he at any time, Sit thou at my right hand, till I have made thine enemies thy footstool?" Heb. i. 13. If this sitting at the right hand does not denote an equality, he might have said it to any of the angels a thousand times, and made it to signify no more in

their case than it does in ours, a place of happiness; for the godly are to be at his right hand. But it is plain the apostle means by it something that never was given to them, nor ever could be; and if he never said that at any time to one of the angels, much less would he ever say it to a man. Can it be expected, that he should at any time call one made of a woman, to come and take a place at his right hand? And yet this he has done, not by advancing the human nature to an adoration, for it can never cease to be a creature, but by owning him who took it, in the Deity that he had before; that his being a "child born," and "a Son given," did not hinder him from continuing "the mighty God, the everlasting Father," Isa. ix. 6.

(2.) He is received by the angels and saints into the glory of a Mediator, as they recognise him in this comprehensive character. "Let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. i. 6. The union of two natures in one person, makes his name "Wonderful" to them. By that they are satisfied, pleased, and secured of their own happiness. They are admitted to a greater insight into the scheme of our redemption; and as there is nothing more surprising in it than the composition of a Saviour, so this lies more open to them than it used to do. They see how He that was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, is declared to be the Son of God with power, and is over all, God blessed for ever. Rom. i. 3, 4; ix. 5.

I believe that at the resurrection of Jesus Christ, or rather at his ascension to the right hand of God, as he carried the two natures along with him, so the union between them became more visible and entertaining than it had been. That was not only a period of greater revelations to our world, but to theirs above. The apostle acquaints us with both these particulars. "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Eph. iii. 8. The subject of his ministry was "the

riches of Christ," not only what he brought to his people, but what he contained in his person, and therefore they are called *unsearchable.*

This description that he gives of his work throws us full upon the objection that some make against the gospel, that if it is a mystery, it cannot be preached, because a mystery is what people cannot know, and preaching is upon a subject they do know, or otherwise they are supposed to talk in the dark. This sort of reasoning is admired, as if it was invincible; but apply it to the text I have now given you, and try the force of it then. Paul tells us that he was in an extraordinary way sent to preach the riches of Christ, and yet in the same breath he saith these are "unsearchable riches." He was to preach what he could not find. The thing that he made known to others was a depth that he never came to the bottom of himself; and if people will laugh at that as a contradiction, it is no matter. It just happens to our Saviour's doctrine as it did to his person. It is "a stumbling-stone and rock of offence" to some, but "to those that believe it is precious." They find a pleasure in rolling and swimming where they cannot reach the ground.

This apostle knew he was called "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery that from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." Eph. iii. 9. And, as if from this time of revelation some light was to spring upwards as well as come downwards; as if the other world was to be a receiver as well as a giver, he adds, "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." These principalities and powers that have their dignity in heavenly places need not be told by us that God is wise; they have seen and admired that attribute in the frame of nature, and the revolutions of Providence. But here is a "manifold wisdom" of God, which has a particular

position to the good of his church upon earth; and the scheme that is wrought here below shall be ever wondered at above. It is a new gospel to them, the day-spring from on high to heaven, as well as to the habitable parts of the earth; it is indeed "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord;" but this was a thing "hid in God," known with a limitation even in heaven itself, till He who all along designed our redemption carried up the nature in which he completed it; and now though we have it at the first hand, they have it at the best.

The wonderful union between God and man was established in our world. It is here that the Child was born and the Son given; but it is most beheld and admired in their world. They see at large what we only see in part. They that beheld his glory in the flesh, and they that behold it now, do it by faith; and if this is opposed to sight, it is a sort of seeing and not seeing. All the love that proceeds from it is a love to one whom we have not seen, in whom though now we see him not, we yet believe, 1 Pet. i. 8. But in heaven faith is no longer the medium of an imperfect vision, nor the hinderance of a complete one. They own him in both his natures, as God and man. Thus their praises to him, and for him, go together, according to that prophetic psalm, "Prayer shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised," Psal. lxxii. 15. This mixture of loving the human nature, adoring the Divine, and admiring the union between both, will be more eminently the work of heaven. We find saints and angels employed upon these delights. You have an instance of this in the saints, who plainly in their language weave together the properties and the merit of the two natures. They call him "The faithful Witness," which, though it is true of him as a man, yet may be understood of his attribute as a God. They say he is "the first begotten from the dead;" this you know must refer to his body; that he is "the Prince of the kings of the earth;" though that may be considered as a reward to the nature in which he suffered, yet it is often

mentioned as the glory of another; that he is "the King of kings, and Lord of lords;" and He of whom this is said only has immortality, and dwells in unapproachable light.

Having thus described his person, there is the same variety to be observed in the tribute of their devotions. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen," Rev. i. 5, 6. His loving us, which always led on the purchase that he made of us, is called an everlasting love. The blood that he shed can be understood of him no otherwise than as he is man; but the virtue of this to wash us from our sins, must be derived from him under other considerations. For it is the prerogative of God to pardon iniquity, to put away transgression; and therefore the finishing of sin is not the effect of his dying as he was a creature; for all that he might have done without any benefit to us; but it is grounded upon his bringing in an everlasting righteousness, Dan. ix. 24. This making us kings and priests is what he deserved, or rather attempted as a man; but it is an honour that comes from the throne. It is only a God who can make us sit in the Divine presence as kings, and serve him as priests. It is not with the blood of a man that we come to the Lord, and bow ourselves to the Most High God. The Divine Majesty would be always inaccessible if He was not "the way," who is also "the truth and the life," John xiv. 4. Thus you see in what language their praises are formed and sung; that they both admire what he suffered as man, and receive what he gives as God.

In the same strain do the angels take notice of him. You may ask, indeed, what concern they have in a nature that is below their own, or how it should ever be a part of their praises, that "Jesus died and rose again:" and it is very true, he is not their Redeemer in that fulness of relation in which he is ours; yet it is said, "he made peace by the blood of his cross;" Col. i. 20; he restored peace where it was

lost, and he established it where it was continued; for both these senses are within the comprehension of the word; "by *himself*," as it ought to be translated, "to reconcile all things, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." Reconciling "things in heaven," is not to be conceived of in the way we speak of that work among things on earth. To us it is a procuring, a deserving, and an opening out a treasure of happiness; to them it is a closing them in, and giving the stamp of eternity to what they enjoy; and therefore they admire what he did upon the cross. The purchase that he made there, was a confirmation for them; so that the apostle says, "I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying, with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing," Rev. v. 11, 12. What they admire in him is his being slain—the death that no other than his human nature could bow to; but the merit that arose out of this, and was equal to all the honour, and glory, and blessing, that are ascribed to him, leads up their thoughts to God. For a creature can never deserve what is peculiar to God. No obedience can make a person equal to Him that sits upon the throne, if he was not so in nature; and thus do both the saints and angels own Him who is God and man, and celebrate this union in their praises, and will do so for ever.

(3.) He is received into glory as Mediator, with regard to his own act; that is, he has declared his resolution to continue both God and man for ever. As the human nature is what he took in the fulness of time, so he might lawfully lay it down again at the end of time, and when he had given up the kingdom, throw off the union. But this he will not do. Though he has our nature to very different purposes from what he once pursued, yet it is the same in substance that ever it was; a created, limited, and dependent soul; a real, a penetrable, and solid body.

There is a great dispute among those who are in the humour to maintain it, whether Christ's taking upon him the human nature was an act of humiliation. The trick of the question lies in this, that the human nature is now a part of his glory, and possessed of a full reward, and therefore having it could be no branch of his suffering. But, not to trifle with unedifying talk, it is very plain, that his taking upon him "the form of a servant," and "being found in fashion as a man," is a great instance of his obedience to the will of God. He is still in the same nature; praised in it, and admired for it. He has truly loved it, he does not come into it as a way-faring man, to tarry for a season. But to show that the union between him and his people is everlasting, he makes that between the Divine and the human nature to be so too; and this will further appear from the examples I shall give you under the next head; and that is,

(4.) He proceeds as God and man in all the works of nature, grace and providence; and therefore you will often observe, that those things are said of him as a man, which can be true of none but a God; nor must they be understood of any other nature than what is Divine; but it is to express the durable union between them, that the Scripture has thus disposed of words that relate to one, as if they might be transferred to the other. Thus you are apprised of that well known text, that there is a "church of God" which he has "purchased with his own blood," Acts xx. 28. Now, though the blood of God sounds with a contradiction, yet the sentence is soon understood. It is but a transplanted word, and only proves that He who did so bleed was no less than God. Thus he proceeds in all his remaining designs. I have mentioned them under the heads of nature, grace and providence. He declares the hypostatical union in every one of them.

1st, In the works of nature. Thus we read of him who spake to us in these last days, that "by him the Father made the worlds," and that "he upholds all

things by the word of his power," Heb. i. 2, 3. God's speaking to us by him, signifies his being a man, "formed out of the clay," as Job had wished it might be: Job xxxiii. 6; but making the worlds by him, is not to be comprehended in this notion of him; because these worlds were made before he was made, that is, before a body was prepared for him; and He, who as man could not bear the weight of his own cross, does nevertheless "uphold all things by the word of his power." This upholding of all things, signifies a maintaining them in their being; and the term "all things" must include angels as well as men. Thus, when it is said, "thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, were created by him, and for him," it is added, that "he is before all things, and by him all things consist," Col. i. 16, 17. Now, in that notion of him we speak as Job did to God, "What shall I do to thee, O thou Preserver of men?" Or, as the Psalmist says, it is He who "holds our souls in life:" Or, as Moses had said before him, "He is thy life, and the length of thy days." It can never be said of a lower nature, that it upholds a higher. It is against all proportion to say, that the Son of man is the Lord, or the support of angels; and yet you see these things are mingled together.

Thus the apostle goes on, that "when he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they," Heb. i. 3, 4. That expression, he "purged our sins," will easily bring us down into the lowest conceptions of him; but that, *for this*, he should for ever sit at the right hand of God, is no way to be accounted for, but from an antecedent dignity. It is true, as a man, as a creature, as a servant, he is made better than the angels; but it is still with a view to this, that he has "by inheritance a more excellent name than they." He was originally, and by right of nature, called by a name which they had not. "For to which of the

angels said the Father at any time, Thou art my Son?"

You are thus to look upon Him who is both God and man, as one that bears up the pillars of the earth. In this manner he speaks by the prophet, "At my rebuke I dry up the sea; I make the rivers a wilderness; their fish stinketh because there is no water, and dieth for thirst. I clothe the heavens with blackness, and make sackcloth their covering," Isa. l. 2, 3. And who is this? One who afterwards speaks of a much lower nature. "The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. The Lord God has opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious; I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting." Would it not be strange to hear a person, whose very face was covered with darkness, talk of his covering the heavens with it! But it shows us, that as these things are to be understood of two different natures, so they are carried on by a union between them both.

2dly, This is still more visible in the works of grace. What he does as a daysman between God and us, supposes that he is both God and man in his own person. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Tim. ii. 5. That phrase is not to be understood as exclusive of his Divinity; for, as a way is made for us "through the veil, that is to say, his flesh," so our welcome there is owing to his being "High Priest over the house of God." And whence does this arise? It is indeed a constitution, but it supposes an eternity of nature. Hence, as the Lord has sworn to him, "Thou art a priest for ever," so the foundation of that is, that "this man," or, as it ought to be rendered, "this person," "because he continueth forever, hath an unchangeable priesthood," Heb. vii. 24. His continuing for ever is considered as antecedent and fundamental to his unchangeable priesthood. This, as the words

there tell us, is to continue forever, both by a Divine appointment, and by his own choice. "For the law maketh men high priests that have infirmity, but the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

It is in this complicated way that he gives promises to his people. One time he would have them take the comfort of this thought, that he went to the Father, and they saw him no more; John xvi. 10; from this does the Spirit "convince the world of righteousness;" that is, his going to the Father and making no return back again, is an argument that the righteousness which he brought in upon the cross, he now brings forth before the throne. This plainly refers to his human nature, we are to see him no more after the flesh; and yet the same mouth has told us, that which is contradictory to the other, if it is not to be understood of another nature; "Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me, and because I live, ye shall live also," John xiv. 19. This is more than we can either believe to be true, or expect to be made good from Christ himself as a man. It is not the human nature that we see again; it is not because this lives that therefore we live also. The life of that is an argument of our resurrection, but it is not the fountain out of which we are supplied with the graces of the Spirit.

3dly, It is thus that he proceeds in all the designs of his providence; by which I do not understand any thing distinct from nature and grace, but rather what is comprehensive of both. Under this head I will give you two particulars, which express the union of the Divine and human natures, viz. his conduct of the church, and his judgment of the world.

First, It is as God and man that he rules his church; giving them laws and life below, and managing the whole of their affairs above. He is "head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all." Hence we read of "heaven being opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him was called faithful and true; and in right-

eousness does he judge and make war," Rev. xix. 11—13. This you will apply to what he does for his people against all their enemies. "His eyes are as a flame of fire, and on his head are many crowns; and he has a name written that no man knows but he himself."

You find, though some among us will allow no mysteries, no unintelligible things on earth, yet there is a great deal of them in heaven. It is added, "He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God." Here is a plain reference to the two natures. The garment that he wears is dipped in blood. It is thus that he is "glorious in his apparel." You cannot possibly strike off this from a relation to his humanity. And yet he who is so attired is called by a name that he had eternally before these garments: for he is "the Word of God," the Word that in the beginning was with God, the Word that was God himself, by whom were all things created and without whom was nothing made that was made, John i. 1—3.

Nay, the Apostle goes on to tell us the signification both of the garment that he wears, and the name that he is known by, that "he trod the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." No wonder, then, that he is red in his apparel, and his vesture is dipped in blood. This he did, when the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was then bruised, his soul was put to grief, and made an offering for sin. And yet upon this vesture, which is the memorial of his sufferings, he has a name written, "The King of kings, and Lord of lords." Thus, you see how he preserves the united character, the dependence of the human nature with the supremacy of the Divine.

It is from hence that we have access to the mercy-seat. Both these considerations enter into our hope; first, That all things are naked and open to him with whom we have to do; that there is no creature that is not manifest in his sight; and that Jesus, the Son of God, as the great High-priest, is entered into the heavens, Heb. iv. 13—16. And, secondly, That "we

have not an High-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." The former is plainly to be understood of the Divine Nature, and the latter of the human; but from both of them we argue for our coming "boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need." As a man he "can have compassion on the ignorant and them that are out of the way, seeing that he himself was compassed about with infirmity." And as God he has not only compassion, but relief for us; and in that notion of him it were blasphemy to say that he is compassed about with any infirmity.

Secondly, You will also see that the Scripture has represented him as a judge of the world, under this union of natures. "God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he has ordained, whereof he has given assurance to all men, in that he has raised him from the dead," Acts xvii. 31. As man he sits upon the throne; thus the suffering nature is to be rewarded. As God he judges the world; thus the obscured nature is to be declared. "The Father," that Person of the Trinity who was not incarnate, "judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son." "He has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man." And yet this is no way destructive of what the Christian religion tells us, that we come "to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to God, the judge of all;" which it would not do, if He who is judge of all, was not "over all, God blessed for ever." "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him; he shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, (that he may judge his people,) Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. The heavens shall declare his righteousness, for God is judge himself," Psal. l. 3—6. What an honour will be put upon our nature,

when he who has taken it into union with him, comes to awake the dead and close up the eternal fate of men and angels! Thus we know that our Redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after our skin worms destroy this body, yet in our flesh we shall see Him who is really God, Job xix. 25, 26.

3. As you have heard at large that the glory of Christ Jesus is what belongs to him as God, and is mentioned with a fulness of language peculiar to the Divine Nature; so when we consider his being received into that, we must take the word in a very different sense from what it bore under the other two particulars. Receiving the human nature into glory was giving it what it never had, and carrying it where it never was. But to say that a God is thus received into glory, is to blaspheme his nature, and confound our own, and darken counsel by words without knowledge.

There is no place where he was not; there is no perfection that he had not. Whilst he was on earth he called himself "the Son of man, who is in heaven," John iii. 13; which phrase, as I have lately shown you, can refer to nothing but his omnipresence. And if Nicodemus had not taken it so, he must have fallen into the same contempt of him that the Jews did, whenever he opened out any pretensions to Divinity. "They had a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God," John xix. 7. The high priest adjured him by the living God, that he should tell them "whether he was Christ, the Son of God." And when he had owned it, the man who asked the question rent his clothes, and charged him with blasphemy; and they all said, "He is guilty of death." Though they looked upon him as "a man approved of God among them, by signs, and miracles, and wonders," yet it always raised an impatience when he affirmed his Deity. "What need we any further witness? ye have heard his blasphemy."—You may see this in a few examples.

The first I will give you is John v. 16, where you find, that Jesus, having healed a poor lame man who had been long waiting at the pool of Bethesda, incurred the displeasure of the Jews, because he did it upon the Sabbath day. He, in vindication of this, provokes them by saying, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Several in our days could easily have explained these words in such a way as to clear him of blasphemy, though perhaps at the expense of running into it themselves. They would have pleaded to Jews as they now do to Christians, 'that calling God his Father, instead of proving that he had a Divine nature, was a plain argument that he had not; that the very title of Father signified his subordination to him who was called so.' Now, if this is a right way of arguing, it is a pity that the discovery should be reserved to the last days, and that the Jews did not know it, because it might have prevented his death, and their wickedness; for it is said, "Therefore sought they the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself *equal with God.*"

Could not he as readily have answered for himself, as the men of our age can answer for him, that he had asserted no equality? that the word *Father* is what angels and men are allowed to use in all their approaches to God, and that therefore his enemies had done violence to his words, that they might introduce violence against his person? But instead of setting them right in their way of thinking, and placing himself to a better advantage in their opinion he goes on with a vast enlargement upon those very heads that had so confounded them;—that "the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that he himself doeth; for as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father: he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." Observe here upon this argument, that if there is any distinction between the

Father and him, it must be infinite; and as they thought he had denied all that, and had made himself equal with God; as this would have been the greatest blasphemy in him to say so, it was the greatest unkindness to them, if he should let them go away with the opinion. He was bound to undeceive them. As he came to do God's will, it cannot be thought he would encourage the least suspicion of running away with his glory; and therefore to leave the Jews ignorant of his true meaning here, was not only a cruelty to them, but a breach of trust in him, and could be no better than a neglect of the Father's honour.

Another example you will meet with, John vi. He had wrought a miracle in feeding five thousand people with five loaves; upon which many went after him. And had he contented himself with the title of a prophet that should come into the world, they would still have followed him; but he thought it needful to assert a great deal more, and that was his coming down from heaven; at this the Jews murmured. Now, instead of striking off the sense which they put upon it, and showing it to be false, he repeats it again. "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead; he that eateth this bread shall live for ever. Many, therefore, of his disciples when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" And what method does he take with them? Does he drop the doctrine to please the men? no, far from it. "When he knew in himself that the disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Does this offend you? what and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" It is plain the matter of their offence was his pretending to that which they thought too much for a creature. That though they admired his preaching, and were astonished at his miracles, yet they could have no conceptions of his Divinity. Jesus said unto them, "Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread

from heaven: they said, Lord, evermore give us this bread. Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me, shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst; but I said unto you, That ye also have seen me and believe not." And no wonder, because, as he himself tells us, there is more than external evidence necessary to that. "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father." Many thousands had already come to him with abundance of zeal, as we are told all along in that very chapter. In this they acted by no higher a principle than carnal reason, which some people will not have us to speak of with any diminution. But there was a coming to him which signifies a believing in him; and this they knew nothing of, nor would they ever have known it without a supernatural revelation. For, "no man," says he, "can come unto me, except the Father that has sent me draw him. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

This doctrine has always proved a parting matter between him and hypocrites, between hypocrites and believers. "There must be heresies among you, that they who are approved may be made manifest among you." When he asked Peter, "Will ye also go away?" he answers, "To whom shall we go, for thou hast the words of eternal life?" If he means only, 'thou hast preached to us the doctrine of eternal life,' they that were gone knew this as well as they that staid. But he designed to express as much in that confession, as Christ himself had done before in his declaration, "I am the bread of life; and the words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life." They that forsook him took this for an extravagance that no creature ought to run into. At this they murmured, as a thing profane in him, and unintelligible to them. "The Jews murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. They said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know; how is it then that he

saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves." Again, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" And yet he goes on with this unintelligible doctrine, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."

This was the declaration that he made. To this did they that continued with him give their testimony. "We believe, and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." If by this title, "The Son of the living God," they did not mean one equal to the living God, they were only trifling with great words of vanity, and said no more than what the apostates would have said as well as they. Every believer is the son of the living God by creation and sanctification: and is it likely that giving him a title, which might be taken in a contracted sense, was that upon which the twelve apostles divided from the rest? Would not the whole crowd who once followed him have said as much as the remaining disciples, if the words might have been taken in the sense that some would give us?

Indeed the question turns very short upon us, 'Can the Son of God be God?' and I think the answer may be as short, 'Yes, as truly as the Son of man is man.' Thus you read, that the Jews held an argument with him a long time: and though he uses very provoking expressions, that they were "the servants of sin," nay, that they were "of their father the devil," and fulfilled his lusts in lies and murders, they so far bear with him, as only to rail at him: "Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" But when he tells them, "Before Abraham was, I am," they are out of all patience, and take up stones to throw at him as a blasphemer, John viii. 44.

48. They would allow him any thing but Divinity. I will give you but one example more; and that is, where he tells them of laying down his life as a good shepherd. He would not have them think by this that he quitted his pretensions to a Divine sovereignty. No: saith he, "No man takes it from me. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again," John x. 11. 18—20. It is observed there was a division among the Jews for these sayings; for many of them said, (what might fit easy enough, where it is thrown as a reproach upon any minister), "He has a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?" Upon this the Jews came round about him, and desired that he would put them out of their uncertainty, and tell them plainly whether he was the Christ. He in answer saith, "I told you, and ye believed not." What was it that they did not believe? that he had a Divine commission? No; this was clear enough from a Divine power: they knew no man could do the things that he did, except God was with him: but they did not believe that he could give eternal life. And they stuck above all at that sentence, "I and my Father are one," John x. 30.

Thus they stumbled at that stumbling-stone; as it is written, "Behold I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone, and a rock of offence; whoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." If he had meant that the Father and he were one in consent and in design, would not all mankind think that of a Christ, nay of a Prophet who came to do wonders upon earth, that the person who wrought such things was one in agreement with him who sent him? Might not Moses have said it? and did he not say what was equivalent to it? Was there any occasion, if that was all that he designed, for them to take up stones, which, as they profess in the innocency of their error, was for *blasphemy*, "because he being a man had made himself God?"

You see, from these examples, where the matter stuck. Now, what he says, which so offended the Jews, might have given the same provocation to Nicodemus, when he tells him, that the Son of man

was then in heaven, John iii. 13. But every one that had heard and learned of the Father came to him; it had pleased God to reveal his Son in him; so that his being received into glory as God, cannot be understood in any sense inconsistent with eternal felicity, and unchangeable fulness. In this respect he is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." I therefore take the phrase to denote such things as these: 1. He threw off the veil that was upon his Divine Nature; 2. He did this with a design of never taking it on again; 3. He afresh presented himself to the adoration of angels; 4. He used the language and prerogatives of God in heaven; 5. He acted as God among his people upon earth.

(1.) He laid aside the veil that was upon the Divine nature. That he obscured himself for a while is plain from all history, and the wonderful expressions under which the Scripture has delivered it. We read of him, that being "in the form of God, he made himself of no reputation;" and how was that, but by taking on him "the form of a servant?" Being made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, Phil. ii. 6—8. You see by this vast variety of phrases, the Apostle would have us established in two things.

First, The reality of Christ's human nature; that appears by the death of the cross, which, as it was the most shameful way of dying, so it must be the most evident and certain, the least liable to any trick or deceit. The Jews themselves, who might laugh at the miracles of his birth, were satisfied there was none at all in his death; and yet, as here was the utmost evidence given to our nature, so,

Secondly, You may also observe, that here was the hiding of another. The fashion of a man, that form of a servant, his becoming of no reputation, hindered the world from seeing any thing of an antecedent glory. He did not then appear to them as having "the form of God," whatever is the meaning of the expression. They that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, "If thou be the Son of

God, come down from the cross." "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God."

That sentence is enough to confound the world, "To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and this is the name that he shall be called, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER." A God that is born as a child, a Father that is given as a Son, do not sound so altogether void of mystery as we are told every thing in our religion ought to do. But if there are any degrees in incomprehensibles, we should think it was still more wonderful to be told, that He who "hid not his face from shame and spitting," was always "full of joy with the light of God's countenance!" that He who died upon the cross as a man, as a malefactor, was without any interruption, "over all, God blessed for ever!"

The Scripture has told us the one as plainly as the other; and though some are angry that we talk of two natures in one Person, yet these things can never be said of one and the same nature. It is vile to say, that a God died, or that a body was at the same time on mount Calvary, and on the mount Sion that is above, the heavenly Jerusalem; that He whose goings forth have been from everlasting, came in the fulness of time; that He who is the Son of the Father, is made of a woman. The Jews objected against it. He had said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men to me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. The people answered him, We have heard out of the law, that Christ abides for ever; and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?" John xii. 32—34.

Are not such characters to be distributed under their proper heads? Do not they flatly contradict one another, and must do so eternally, unless you refer them to different natures? He came to a world that knew him not, though he had made it; nay, he came to his own, and they received him not, though he was the Lord whom they sought, and the Messenger of the covenant in whom they delighted. But to them

that received him he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them who believed on his name; John i. 12, 13; that is, he gave them a new nature. Their believing in him, their receiving him, was a thing given to them; for they were "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," as a partaker of the same flesh with ourselves. They had seen him with their eyes, they had looked upon him; as the apostle said in another of his writings, their hands had handled the Word of life, 1 John i. 1. not as he was the Word of life, but he submitted to an evidence that was thus familiar and sensible: and they beheld his glory; and what was that? "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." They beheld it indeed, but others did not; and it was very needful they should not; for, as the apostle argues, "had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;" through ignorance they did it, as did also their rulers, 1 Cor. ii. 8; Acts iii. 17.

You remember he charged the devils that they should not make him known; nay, when he carried three disciples with him into the mount of transfiguration, and there came a voice to him from the excellent glory, he saith to them, "Tell the vision to no man, till the Son of man be risen from the dead." And even before that, he had bound them with a caution. "Who do men say that I am?" and by their answer it appears, that though men knew not what he was, yet they had a wonderful opinion of him, when they took him to be one raised from the dead; an old Prophet, not only raised up by heaven, but sent down from it. "But who say ye that I am? Peter saith, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This they must ascribe to supernatural discoveries, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but my Father who is in heaven." And yet, though he saith this is the rock upon which he will build his Church, he orders them not to tell any man that he was Jesus

the Christ. What! must they tell no man now, what they were to tell all men afterwards? shall the testimony that should be diffused among all nations, be at present concealed from their own? Yes; and the reason is this, because the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men. But now,

He as God is received into glory. He was declared (ὁρισθεις, marked out definitely) to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead," Rom. i. 4; not *made* the Son of God by that. What the Psalmist speaks of God's setting his King upon the holy hill of Sion, in saying to him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," the apostle fixes to the resurrection; that this was the day the great God spoke of, Psal. ii. 6, 7; Acts xiii. 32, 33. He was called the only begotten of the Father long before that. It was not the first time that he took the name himself, or was known by it among his people; but from that time he should be better known, not only in his mediatorial capacity, but in his infinite and eternal nature.

(2.) This obscuring of the Divine nature is over for ever: he is no more to suffer as a man, no more to be hid as a God. "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, ye shall know that I am he." If the Gospel that declares him "is hid, it is hid to them that are lost;" for where the light of the glorious Gospel shines, he appears to be "the image of the invisible God;" that is, he shows himself to us under all the notions that we have of God, or otherwise he is not the image, unless you think the image makes one discovery, and the original another; that is, unless it is a false image. If Christ is not what the Father is, he cannot be "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person," Heb. i. 3. For the brightness of the Father's glory, in that place, is not to be understood of an attribute, or a manifestation of that attribute; for if so, the creation, the gospel, and the graces of his people, are the brightness of his glory. But if this is a title given to a being, a person, a subsisting agent, and if we are told these things of such a one's nature, he cannot

have the glory of that other, nor be himself the brightness of that glory, if he is inferior to him.

The express image of any person denotes the same nature with that person, when we are speaking of real and original characters. Thus, for example, when it is said that God made man in his image and his likeness, it can signify no more than a similitude; that there was something in that nature which had a resemblance of the Divine. But when it is said that Adam begat a son "in his own likeness, and after his image," there the words must signify a great deal more than a mere similitude; because that son had the very nature that the father had, and the description is on purpose to tell us that they were both creatures of the same kind. This is observed in a nature which is not at all altered by succession; there is no subordination of essence between a father and a son; that is, a son is as truly and fully of the human nature as a father.

Now the question is, whether the Apostle, in saying that Christ is the express image of his person, means only what Moses does, when he says man was made in God's likeness? I think the words contain a great deal more; because, as soon as he had said this, he immediately adds, (that which is peculiar to God,) that he "upholds all things by the word of his power." Though he designs to speak of him in the mediatorial characters, yet he introduces them by those that are antecedent to them.

God's speaking to us by his Son, must be understood of the Son as he was man. His appointing him to be "the heir of all things," that is, to receive the glory of all things, makes his inheritance relate to him as a Mediator. But his making the worlds by him, is the sentence upon which the dispute begins; the question is, whether these words denote a nature that is equal to the Father, or one that is subordinate to him? Whatever be the meaning of that expression, it is evident that from it the Apostle ascends to consider, not what Christ is as a creature or as a Redeemer, but what he was in himself, abstracted from

all his works; and then tells us, that he is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." This does not come in among any rewards bestowed upon him. It is not the recompense of his death. No; that is mentioned in these words: "He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." His upholding all things, and doing it as a God, "by the word of his power," is considered first, before he enters into the particulars of his merit, and the glory that arose out of it. This he did long before he took upon him our nature. And, therefore, as he has thrown off the veil under which he was for some time obscured, he never designs to take it on again. The human nature shall no more darken the Divine to the sons of men. They above shall see him as he is, see one like themselves united to a glory that no man has seen or can see. He is at the same time confessed to be the Lamb in the midst of the throne, and the invisible God, who only has immortality, and dwells in the light that none can approach to.

(3.) He may be said to be received into the glory of the Divine nature, as he afresh presented himself to the adoration of the angels. There were new orders issued out upon his resurrection, as the apostle observes in a passage that I have often addressed to your thoughts. "When he brings the First-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him," Heb. i. 6.

The period of his bringing the First-begotten into the world, will be easily confessed by all to be, either his birth, or his resurrection. What is here affirmed is true of both, but it seems more natural to understand it of the latter. For the words are, ὅταν δε παλιν εἰσαγῃ, "when he brings him in again," which he may be said to do from the time of his rising again, or his being revealed from heaven by the effusion of the Spirit. Here I would desire your notice of two things;

First, That this is a quotation out of the Psalms, and therefore must carry the same sense here that it

does there, or otherwise the Scripture is rather perverted than applied. You find it, Psal. xcvii. 7. "Worship him, all ye gods." Indeed you may observe here is an alteration in the words, which the apostle would never have made, if it was absolutely needful to preserve the very sound of the letter. Nor would the Holy Spirit have thrown such a reproach upon himself, in departing from the plain words of the Old Testament, by bringing them with any variation into the New. However,

Secondly, He who is called the First-begotten is recommended to the worship of all the angels of God; not only set above them, for that he might be as a creature, but placed before them as the object of their religious adoration. That the term *worship* very often signifies no more than civil respect, cannot be denied; but it must signify in this place what it did in the Psalms. The Holy Spirit never runs into the impertinence of bringing out words, and leaving the sense behind him, and therefore you shall have no human decision to determine the meaning of this passage; read it in the Old Testament. "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goes before him, and burns up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world; the earth saw and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory. Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods," Psal. xcvii. 1—7. The question upon the whole passage is, whether it is to be understood of a supreme or a derived God? I need only say, "Consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds."

(4.) Our blessed Lord is received into the glory of the Divine nature, inasmuch as from the time of his resurrection he speaks the language and uses all the

prerogatives of God. We may suppose what he says in heaven, by what he said when he was just going thither. He began to put on majesty at the time when he was most to conceal it. He talks, in the view of all his sufferings, like a conqueror more than a captive. Having told his disciples, that the hour was come, that they should be scattered every one to his own, and leave him alone, John xvi. 32; by which he describes the unhappy and shameful condition that he was thrown into; he runs immediately into another view of that same period. Lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, "Father, the hour is come;" John xvii. 1, 2; the same hour that he spake of to his disciples, when they were so faint in their zeal, and he in his strength—the hour of thick darkness that was to come upon him—the thing itself that he had prayed against, "Father, if it be possible save me from this hour; nevertheless for this cause came I to this hour;" it is what he tells his enemies was their hour, and the power of darkness:—and yet, after all these melancholy things, he now speaks of it as his own, "The hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee; as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him:" let him have a glory equal to his empire over the whole extent of all nature, and to his title as the fountain and finisher of all grace.

It is plain from this language, that he puts on the king, the sovereign, at the time that he was going to be a sacrifice. Though he appeared in his dyed garments, he was then "glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength, speaking in righteousness, and mighty to save," Isaiah lxiii. 1, 2. In that very hour when the human nature was to be laid low, he breaks through the clouds, by asserting the existence, and claiming the privileges of another nature. He can scarcely be said to plead in the form of a servant, though he was just going to give the most dreadful instance of his being so.

He was then upon the last and greatest part of his obedience, that unto death, even the death of the cross,

and yet even then he speaks the language of a God. What could the disciples think of his prayer, when they saw in him that passive helpless way upon the cross! How would they be able to reconcile the shame and scandal of his dying to what he said of a "glory with the Father before the world was!" When they beheld his agonies and heard the greatest complaint that ever was uttered, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" what harmony could there be between such words and these that had lately flowed out of his mouth, "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world!" John xvii. 24, 25.

This was not the language of a suffering nature. He spake not these things as a man, but as he says in that very prayer, "These things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves." Though they were in a little time to see him under the wrath of God and scorn of sinners, they must understand *that* as no more than the atonement that was made in one nature; but all this while, he had the unchangeable perfections of another.

There is something in this prayer, and especially in that part of it which I have lately given you, inconsistent with his character as a sufferer, and his dependence as a creature. When he considered and expressed himself in fashion as a man, no word so assuming came out of his mouth, as "Father I will;" no, he disclaimed all authority as a subject; and "being made under the law," never placed himself in that nature above it. "I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me." And when "in the days of his flesh, he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears," he demands nothing; "not as I will, but as thou wilt." It is evident, that in these words he talks within the limits of a creature and in the form of a servant; that though he was the best of creatures, the beginning of the creation of God, the chief of servants in whom God

would be glorified, yet still he claims no authority; "he learned obedience by the things that he suffered."

But what a nature is that which changes the language, that always gave us so great an example of humility? Who is this, that, speaking of his people's happiness, saith, "Father, I will" have it so; though when he speaks of his own, it is no higher than, "Not my will, but thine be done?" These parts in his carriage would be inconsistent if you did not understand them of two different natures. No creature ought to say what he says, because, whatever his merit might be, there is still an infinite distance between him and the Most High God; and especially considering the thing itself that he demands, "That they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." What! shall one that durst not insist upon his own preservation, be thus positive about the disposal of all his people?

When the mother of Zebedee's children came with a petition that her two sons might sit, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left, in his kingdom, he tells her it was not his to give. As man he was so entirely subject, that he had no right to appoint a precedency in his Church. And this shows, that they who call themselves his vicars and representatives, go a great deal further than ever their principal did. They that think themselves empowered to bestow the chief places in the Redeemer's kingdom, assume a greatness that he himself never pretended to; for he tells this woman, who wanted to have her two sons dignified and distinguished, that it was not his to give, but to those for whom it was prepared of his Father. And yet here he talks quite otherwise: 'A precedency in the Church below is not mine to give as a man, but eternal life is mine to give. I have a right to bestow all that.' And how can this be allowed in one that is not God? 'I must leave it to the Father to fill these two places at my right and left hand in my kingdom, because in this human nature he is greater than I. But I can tell even the Father

himself, that *I will* have all my people with me in heaven.'

Certainly one that spoke after this manner, thought it not robbery to make himself equal with God. And what will he have them there for? "To behold the glory that thou hast given me;" and lest we should look upon this as no other than the glory of his reward as a Mediator, he adds, 'For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.' 'The glory I speak of is that which consists in thy love; this love I enjoyed eternally before any of the duty that I have now gone through. Besides a glory that is given as a recompense to my actions, I had one with thee in person before the world was; and the glory that arises from this, is what I would have them behold in heaven.' So that if you invert this whole passage, there are three things contained in it:

First, That the Father had a love to the Son before the foundation of the world, antecedent to the obedience that he threw himself into. Secondly, That this love is the ground, the matter, the conveyance and perfection, of his chief glory. Though the human nature is advanced and highly exalted, yet the glory that he had before the world was, is the main inheritance, and what he would have his people behold; and this they will find is comprehended in an eternal love. And, thirdly, this glory is so great, that he sets his throne as the throne of God. He speaks the language of the Most High, and that not only to the world, but to the Father himself. He uses words that conceal every thing of a subordination. When the Father speaks to him, it is in these terms; "To the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." When he speaks to the Father, he claims the same equality, that the Father in speaking to him had owned: "*I will*, that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am."

Thus has the Scripture declared him to be above every name in heaven. We read that the throne of God, and the Lamb, is there. Glory is ascribed to

Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever. Can we think that an inferior nature shall have equal praises? Indeed, if the distinction of supreme and subordinate worship had come from heaven, we might have carried it thither again. But these are no words that the Holy Ghost teaches; no worship at all is allowed in that state but what is given to the Most High, if we may judge of what they do in the city, by the account we have from one who saw the best representation of it; I mean the apostle John. He would needs have fallen down at the feet of the angel to worship him. No manner of doubt he meant no more than a subordinate worship; there is no room to imagine that he looked upon this angel as a God; and yet the answer is, "see thou do it not, for I am of thy brethren; worship thou God," Rev. xxii. 8. The force of what he saith lies in this, 'the worship thou owest to God is so great and comprehensive, that we must not have it even in a lower degree. Every creature here, is thy fellow servant.'

Christ himself, as a man, is one of our brethren. If an angel, because he is one of our brethren, is not to be worshipped at all, then He who is the first born among many brethren has no claim to it; and it is certain he has not in that relation: but yet it is equally evident, that the praises given to the Father are, in the same language, offered to him, which makes it needful for us to conceive of him as infinitely more than a Mediator, and that is, "over all, God blessed for ever."

(5.) He may be said to be received into the glory of the Divine nature in the Church upon earth, because he reveals himself to his people in this world as the Most High God. I have shown that he could not be "justified in the Spirit" if he was not God. It is beneath the eternal Spirit to come down from heaven, and lay out all his testimony to the honour of a creature. No; when he glorifies Christ, he does it by taking the things of Christ, and showing them to us, i. e. letting us know what he is. And what are the things that he thus discovers? no less than

the whole treasure of the Divine nature. "All that the Father hath is mine, and therefore I said, He shall take of mine and show it unto you," John xvi. 15.

He could not be "preached unto the Gentiles" if he was not God. The great subject of our ministry is more than a creature. We durst not call people from their dumb idols to trust in a Saviour, if he were not "the living God." Nor is he "believed on in the world" under any other notion. Believing that he was an extraordinary prophet, is no more than believing that he had a miraculous birth; neither of these is believing in him, or resting our souls upon him for salvation. If an angel were to come down into our nature, he might be produced in a glorious manner, and would be furnished with great qualifications, and I could believe all that was said of him; but this falls vastly short of believing *in him.* I can commit the keeping of my soul to none but a "faithful Creator." Any of the inhabitants above may be the messenger of glad tidings, but it requires a nature greater than was ever created to be "the author of eternal salvation." David thought so, when he said, "Into thy hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." And Stephen meant no less in the last cry of his faith, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Thus is he revealed *to* us, but how is he revealed *in* us? for that is the expression that the apostle uses when he speaks of practical religion; "It pleased God to reveal his Son in me," Gal. i. 15, 16. As this is a word which man's wisdom never taught, so it belongs to a thing that man's wisdom never felt, and what no hypocrite has been acquainted with. Our Lord told the disciples, "I am with you always to the end of the world." That relates to their work in general. In particular he says, "where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;" not in a bodily presence, or visible representation, but in such a manner as shows his Divine glory. "The New Jerusalem," the gospel church, "comes down from God out of heaven, prepared as a

bride adorned for her husband." Upon which there was "a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." Who is this God? He that spoke afterwards, and said, "It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son," Rev. xxi. 2, 3. 6, 7. It is he who has his tabernacle with men.

Thus converted sinners have found it. If a man that is unlearned, or ignorant, comes into your assemblies, and "the secrets of his heart are made manifest," "he is convinced of all, he is judged of all." Christ Jesus, whom he once despised, has laid him open to himself; and what is the consequence of this change? "Falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that *God* is in you of a truth," 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. What he says gives no testimony to Christ's being among them, or the truth of that religion which he did not understand before, unless you will make his saying, "God is in you," to tally with our Saviour's promise, "When two or three are met in my name, *I* am in the midst of them."

We read of God's raising him from the dead, which must be understood of his human nature. The Divinity could not die, and was not buried. The setting him at his own right hand, far above all principalities and powers, (Eph. i. 20—22;) you must refer to his office as Mediator. He is made "head over all things to the Church—the fulness of him that filleth all in all." A head of authority he may be by constitution, but his being a head of influence supposes a nature agreeable to what shall be done by him, and that is to quicken those who were dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. ii. 1. It is all one to the argument, whether these last words are to be understood of the Son or of the Father. If we may apply them to the Son, that it is he who converts the soul, then the proof is made

at once; and if this is mentioned as an act of the Father, it is that we may conceive of it as the greatest work of God. Now it is no more than we read of our Saviour in other places, that "as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." It is he who sanctifies; he is "the author," and will be the "finisher of our faith," John v. 21; Heb. xii. 2.

Thus have I considered the manner of our Lord's coming by this glory, or how we are to apprehend his being "received" into it, in his lower nature as *man*, in his office as *Mediator*, and, lastly, as he is in the form of *God*. I will give you an application of this part of my subject, before I pass on to another.

(1.) If he was thus received into glory, then you may be very well assured, he will never lose that glory. He sits at God's right hand, till all his enemies are made his footstool, Psal. cx. 1. And this is a perpetual honour, as the apostle observes in his quotation of that passage, "After he had offered one sacrifice for sins, he *for ever* sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool," Heb. x. 12, 13.

You must not conclude from these things, that there will be no opposition made to him; for as "the god of this world" is his great antagonist, so his way of pushing on the war is by blinding "the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," 2 Cor. iv. 4. Satan's own eyes are open enough; he knows him who he is, (as he has often confessed,) "the Holy One of God;" and therefore as he can never succeed upon himself in contradicting the Divinity of a Saviour, he throws the rebellion into another form, and has his tools in an unbelieving world. His influence upon them, they may apprehend, does only lead them into the acts of "free thinking," but it is indeed *blinding* their eyes. It is no matter what splendid names they may give to this temper, when the Father of lights himself has called it a blindness. Jesus himself has said, "For judg-

ment am I come into this world, that they that see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind," John ix. 39. Thus Esaias had said before, "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted," John xii. 40.

We read of great men that are engaged against him; but all this while "the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing," when "the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed." The apostles gave a twofold interpretation of this passage. First, It was true personally, referring it all to the malice of men against our blessed Lord himself. The heathen raged, and the people, (that is, the Jews,) imagined a vain thing. "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," Acts iv. 24. 27, 28. Secondly, They take the sense of the prophecy to be extended further, and believe themselves included in the design of these words. "Now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word;" and they not only prayed for this mercy, but were confirmed in their belief of it: for this they could rest themselves upon the words of David, that "He who sits in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision; yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." He laughs at their rage; he sees it is "a vain thing" that they imagine, and notwithstanding all their opposition, the Father will maintain his own appointment in these two particulars with respect to a Saviour: 1. In his sole authority over his church. 2. In the full and proper Divinity of his person. These are things that he has established. Christ is not only exalted in heaven above all the injury that

their unbelief and malice would do him, but they shall not be able to carry their point upon earth.

1. One thing which He that sits in the heavens will secure, is the authority of a Redeemer over his churches. "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." And this is not only true in fact, but he has raised up witnesses to own it. Though these are oftentimes clothed in sackcloth, nay, more than that, have their vestures, like his, dipped in blood, yet they overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they love not their lives unto the death, Rev. xii. 11. If cruelty and fraud could have rooted this principle out of the earth, it had swum away in the rivers of innocent blood that have been shed in the defence of it. We should have lost it with our martyrs, seen it killed at their executions and buried in their graves. But it is still alive; upon that "the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it," Isa. xiv. 32.

No doubt, when persecution brings us under a scrutiny, many thousands will rather give up the truth than give up themselves, and will scarce be Protestants at the stake, though they are well paid for being so in the church. But I make no question, that when all the greatness and the establishments of this world turn against the doctrines of religion, the God of grace will raise up some to assert the Gospel without a human law, which they have honestly professed with one. With such a spirit was the Protestant religion spread over the nations. They tore the name of Christ out of the hands of the man of sin, who pretends to represent him. The Lord consumed him with the breath of his mouth, and destroyed him with the brightness of his coming.

2. Another thing that the Great God will not give up, is the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity. Who is this King upon the holy hill of Zion? Or rather, let us first inquire, what is meant by *Zion* itself. Certainly not the hill which is now ploughed as a field, and made as the high places of the forest, but the

Church of the New Testament, the "Mount Sion," which is "the city of the living God." And who is the *King* exalted there, but He that suffered in view of the former Zion? Now, it is said, that "the Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, to all generations." He that is exalted upon this hill is "Jehovah, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom," and who is also the God of his people. Thus Zion, that published glad tidings about the Messiah, speaks of him in this language, "saying to the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" Heb. xii. 22; Psal. cxlvi. 10; Isa. xl. 10.

And indeed the Psalmist, having introduced the Father as giving out that resolution, "I have set my King upon my holy hill," brings in the Son as replying to it, or rather enlarging upon it, "I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." The season that this refers to, the time of Christ's making the declaration, the Apostle tells us was his resurrection. The decree itself is, that the Lord saith to him, "Thou art my Son;" not that the relation began then, but the meaning is, that from this time it shall be owned; he would show him afresh to the world; and as the resurrection itself is an evidence by which he was "declared to be the Son of God with power," so the sending down of the Spirit afterwards was to carry the testimony into the hearts of men; and therefore all our owning him to be King upon his holy hill of Zion, amounts to little without a confession of this, as the most important doctrine, that he is "the Son of God." We are not merely contesting with the Jews, whether Moses or Jesus shall be head of the Church; whether this person or that shall give us laws; but the question is, whether He who is the head of the Church, is a creature or a God. Now, the decree which He declares, and which they that are faithful will never shun to declare, relates to his Divine nature.

That he is called the Son of God because of his miraculous birth, his great qualifications and purity,

is true enough; but this falls short of the *degree*. If that was all that he meant by it, the name might have been given to the angels, and the apostle could not have borne up with this challenge, "To which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?" They are called "the sons of God;" and though it is true, they are not raised from the dead, yet if the day of resurrection would have been the day of his declaring them begotten, it is what all the saints shall have. But it is plain, that the title of *Son* here, is to be taken, as it is every where else when we use it properly, to express a sameness of nature with the Father. Angels and men are only called the sons of God by a figure; and though it is said, "Of his own will has he begotten us by the word of truth," James i. 18; it is to be understood with a limitation. But when the highest name that God gives to our blessed Saviour is calling him his Son, the generation he speaks of is not to denote any period when it was done, but an equality of existence; or otherwise the words Father and Son must be made to signify in the Divine nature what they never do in the human, two different sorts of being.

(2.) If he is thus received into glory, let it be an argument for receiving him into your own souls. Admire the condescension that shines through those words, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open unto me, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me." O sinners! will you reject Him who delivers his importunity from a throne? He begs admittance into your hearts ever since he has laid aside the form of a servant.—Cry out as Thomas did, "My Lord, and my God!"

(3.) Consider the happiness of as many as received him: "To them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." I will mention but two things in a way of exhortation and comfort.

First, Take care that you do not let him go, either

in doctrine or practice. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" and therefore, "be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines." You have heard of his perfections; it is not enough that you admire those of his human nature; the princes of this world owned all that, and it was pure ignorance of other things that made them crucify the Lord of glory. If you give up his Divinity, you will be but empty professors of him, and he but an empty Saviour to you. As it is a God whom you are contending for, so he can be no less whom you depend upon. He that is able to keep what you have committed to him, "able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy," is "the only wise God our Saviour," Jude 24, 25. Know the truth, and "the truth shall make you free." This is your crown, and take heed lest any man run away with it. He that saves your souls, he that will raise your bodies, must have a power by which he is "able to subdue all things to himself," Phil. iii. 21.

Secondly, Support yourselves with the hope of being received where he is. Then you will behold the glory that some deny with rage and confidence, foaming out their own shame; and which is always owned to be unspeakable. It is the matter of our testimony upon earth. We believe, and are sure, that he had a glory with the Father before the world was; but what this is, is a question that overwhelms us all at once; however, the day is coming when we shall know that he is in the Father, and the Father in him, and he in us, John xiv. 11. 20.

CHAPTER III.

OPINIONS AGAINST THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST CONSIDERED.

THE second general head which I have always given you under every branch of this great subject, was to open what we have been insisting on, as an argument of our Lord's Divinity: and therefore by the rules of method that I have all along observed, I must now have shown you, that as "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, and believed on in the world;" so it is no other than the same living and true *God* who is "received up into glory." But this design is already answered; for I have in several particulars fairly proved, that the glory which Jesus Christ is now possessed of, is peculiar to the Divine nature, and that many things which the Scriptures say of him, could not be laid down, with either modesty or justice, if he was not the Most High God.

This argument I have drawn through the particular attributes of spirituality, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and eternity; the creation that he has wrought, and the worship that he receives. You have heard at large that these things are never said of a creature; that God has always claimed them as his own, and has frequently told us, that they shall not be given to another; that if such characters do not belong to him alone, we have no notion left under which to conceive of a God; all distinctions are thrown down and laid open, that he has established between himself and his creatures. If another being has a power that is almighty, and an understanding that is infinite; if he can fill the heaven and the earth; if he is unchangeable in his nature, and receives the highest expressions of homage; and yet is not God, we are at a loss to know what God is, and have not one character left for him which may not be given to another.

And yet in the fullest manner, with terms unlimited and undisguised, are these Divine perfections revealed as belonging to the great Redeemer. Thus the Holy Spirit has declared him; thus his people in every age have received him. Thomas calls him his *Lord* and his *God*, and so must we, if we are of those blessed ones "that have not seen, and yet have believed." "These things are written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing we might have life through his name." This is the truth they have witnessed to, this is the food they lived upon, and the good doctrine they were nourished with.

I have given you the arguments just as I have found them, proposing this great article in no other light than that of plain Scripture, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." Had the arguments been charged with insufficiency, I should gladly have attended to any thing that might prove it. But when, instead of fair answers, the whole work is called *enthusiasm*, you may be sure the victory is gained; for that is always the last refuge of a baffled enemy, who goes off the field, running and railing, and rather than not be insolent grows profane; turning aside to vain jangling, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. They speak evil of the things they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption, counting it pleasure to riot in the day time, spots and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings. 1 Tim. i. 6, 7; 2 Pet. ii. 12, 13. On these accounts I am prevented from considering this branch of our religion in the way that I have taken with all the rest; for, having in the first part of my work, proved that the glory of Christ is a glory that he had in communion with the Father and in full equality to him, I would not enter upon that argument again.

I shall therefore pursue this proof another way, by considering what is offered against it. By the faithful word we are to exhort and convince the gainsayers, the unruly and vain talkers and deceivers,

whose mouths must be stopped, because they subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, Tit. i. 9—11.

The defamation that flies at large, the trial of cruel mockings, cannot be for our subscribing what we believe, but for believing what we subscribe. Could we have been content to stab the doctrine with the very pen that signed it, we might have gone untouched in our reputation. If they could once have made us ashamed of our glory, they had soon brought us to glory in our shame. But it is for the sake of Christ that men separate us from their company, and cast out our names as evil. And we are taught what to do in such a day; to rejoice and be exceeding glad, for the great reward that is laid up in heaven. However, let us "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel; in nothing terrified by our adversaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to us of salvation, and that of God. For to us it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but to suffer for his sake," Phil. i. 27—29. I shall do these three things: I. Give you some account of the opposition that is made to this doctrine of Christ's Divinity. II. The reasons that are pleaded for the opinion. III. The ways that are taken to promote the cause.

I. The opposition that is made to our Lord's Divinity has been various. Truth, like the sun, has kept its place for several ages; the faith delivered to the saints is the faith that is yet admired by the saints; they are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." But error keeps wheeling round, carrying on the same design through all forms and shapes. The corruptions in doctrine are usually called after the people that spread them in the world; and all these names have been taken up, as God foretold, for a curse among his chosen. The men that perverted the truth, made a little rumbling in the church for a while; but as their root was rottenness, so their blossom went up as dust.

Samosatenus was one of this wretched number a long while ago; a man of a most vicious life, who having denied the Lord that bought him in practice, as a cheat to his conscience, afterwards did the same in doctrine. His notions were very little different from those that the two Socinus's the uncle and the nephew, revived a great many ages after, by which they blasted the reformation in Poland, and with respect to the Protestant faith, "turned a fruitful land into barrenness." These assert, that Christ is no more than a man divinely inspired, and deny that he had any existence before that in the womb of the Virgin Mary. I do not find that their notion goes any higher than what the apostle tells us his very enemies had of him. Ye men of Israel, Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God among you by signs, and miracles, and wonders, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know, Acts ii. 22.

Others have carried on their quarrel with the truth in a different way. These were those called Aetians and Eunomians, who said God might be comprehended by us, (as if they were resolved to set out with impudence enough,) and that the Son was altogether unlike the Father in being, power, and will, and that the Spirit was created by the Son; that Christ did not take to him a human soul, but only a body.

These were also the opinions of the Arians, though they spake with a greater veneration for the dignity of the Son than the other had learned to do, calling him "the best and most glorious creature." The Ebionites were much earlier than these that I have mentioned, but held almost the same opinions with those that make up the Socinian system.

The Macedonians seem to be only the dregs of the Arians about the year three hundred and twelve. Their boasted opinion was, that the Son is not of the same essence with the Father, but only like him. Besides these, we read of the Noetians, the Praxeans, and the Sabellians, who made the names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be no more than three dif-

ferent characters and representations of God; so that when we consider him as a Creator, he is to be called the Father—as a Redeemer, the Son—and as a Comforter, the Holy Ghost. These denied the persons as the other did the nature. Hence they asserted, that the Father was born, suffered upon the cross, and rose again from the dead; for which they were called *Patripassians.*

As these persons were very confused in their opinions, they could be no less in their practice. The Arians spake of Christ with more respect than those that went before them, but denied him to be the proper object of worship. The Samosatenians would not baptize in his name. The Socinians, though they conceived of him in the same manner, nevertheless declared that divine adoration should be paid to him. This very difference was the thing that split the antitrinitarian interest in Poland, and you may be sure it will have the same fate in England, when the hot humour that now breaks out against the truth is struck inwards, as it seldom fails to do in a little time.

At present we have a scheme advanced that would seem to be different from all those that I have mentioned; but if you inquire into it, you will find it distinguished from Arianism by nothing else but cowardice and confusion. That is, if it is not Arianism, it is nonsense. Thus a certain author in our days has delivered his thoughts in these propositions.

'That with the Father, who is the first and supreme cause, there has existed from the beginning a second person, who is his Word and Son; and with the Father and Son there has existed from the beginning a third Divine person, who is the Spirit of the Father and the Son. That the Father alone is self-existent, underived, unoriginated, and independent. That the Father is the sole original of all power and authority, and is the author and principle of whatever is done by the Son or by the Spirit; and that the Scripture, when it mentions the one God, or the only God, always means the Supreme person of

the Father. That the Son, or second person, is not self-existent, but derives his being, or essence, and all his attributes, from the Father, as from the supreme cause.'

In the next proposition he distinguishes himself both from the Arians and from those that I hope we may be yet allowed to call *orthodox*. 'They,' saith he, 'are worthy of censure, who either, on the one hand, presume to affirm that the Son was made ἐξ ἀκ ὀντων *out of nothing*, or, on the other hand, that he is a self-existent being.' And the ground of this critical peculiarity he lays down thus: 'That the Scripture in declaring the Son's derivation from the Father, never makes mention of any limitation of time, but always supposes and affirms him to have existed with the Father from the beginning, and before all worlds. They are also justly to be censured, who, presuming to be wise above what is written, and intruding into things which they have not seen, presume to affirm, that there was a time when the Son was not.'

Thus have I laid before you what is usually called *the new scheme*, in the very words of the man that has drawn it. I hope you have heard so much of the Deity of our blessed Lord, in a long train of discourses, as will convince you it is not a thing to be distinguished away into some uncertain medium between a God and a creature.—I would observe two things upon all these propositions.

First, That they are far from being delivered in Scripture words. I believe there never was a creed or catechism in the universe that more positively determined the sense of the Bible with less use of its language; and therefore it is cutting us both ways, that this is admired as Scripture doctrine by the very people that talk so much against Scripture consequences. Though perhaps one may find an excuse for that management; for indeed I cannot take these propositions to be Scripture consequences, as has been abundantly shown by severals, whose praises are in all the churches of Christ, and will, I doubt not,

further appear from different quarters, as we come to be daily taken off from our lower debates, and driven to secure the foundation.

Secondly, I may further observe, from this man, and his communication, that it is a hard thing to escape his censures. His charity has pitched itself in a point, and we lose it, if we take one step beyond the narrowest notion that ever was advanced in the world. They are to be censured who say the Son is a creature, and they are to be censured who say he is a God! And what then must become of all the world, who till now never imagined there was any medium between these two? We must not be allowed to say he had a beginning, or that there was a time when he was not, nor must we call him eternal. Reason and Scripture, philosophy and revelation, the light of nature itself, have always taught us to say, that there was one supreme cause, and every being is either that first Being, or made by him. If he was made, there must be some moment of time when he was not made. Every thing, but that individual first cause, had a beginning; no existence could be eternal but what was necessary.

Did ever any learning talk against these maxims? Well may that be called a "new scheme" that destroys all the principles that are as old as human nature! And how bold is it to censure men for not coming into an opinion that is flat folly to universal reason! that a Being may be neither made nor not made, neither have a beginning, nor be without beginning! neither be a God nor a creature! derived from another, and yet be coeternal with that other! No wonder that we read so much against a certainty in matters of faith; for this is the way to lose it in matters of reason. Was there ever any mystery so inconceivable as this heap of thoughts? Cannot I as soon believe that three are one, as that any thing can be and not be? Can there be in any doctrine of the Christian religion a more horrible jar, than to talk of a derived God, an originated eternal essence?

You see what a wilderness we are thrown into, a

wide and howling wilderness, when we leave the right ways of the Lord. I believe verily that the Arian scheme is no more agreeable to Scripture than this; but I am sure it is more agreeable to sense. These people are fairer adversaries than such as send out their opinions in masquerade. The Arians are censured by their younger brethren for speaking out, and acting in open daylight. And though they made a terrible slaughter in the peace of the churches, yet nothing is so frightful to an honest man, as a pestilence that walks in darkness, that we suck in without seeing it.

Others have lighted their candles at this author's; but as they do not write with his caution, it will be very hard for them to keep clear of his censure. We are told by one, "that the Word, or the λογος, was an intelligent agent or being distinct from the one God the Father; and that to assert that he was the same being with the Father, is to assert that he was the Father." And again, "That Christ is not represented in the Scripture as equal to God, and that the same absolute perfections are not ascribed to Christ which are to the Father."

I hope the contrary to this has appeared from such a collection of scriptures as all the adversaries in the world will not be able to gainsay or resist. And yet this person in another of his propositions tells us, "Christ is to be worshipped." The very thing which another of them exclaims against, and storms in a question, "What shall we say in the great day of account, when we are accused, under pretence of honouring the Son, of giving him the honour that is only due to the Father?" That which the one makes dutiful, the other makes tremendous! The one saith, we are not Christians without it in this world; the other saith, we shall be condemned for it in another.

What a strait is a serious person drawn into by the clashing of two authors, who both write for the same cause! There is not such a venture for a poor soul in this case, as there was for the lepers at the gate of Samaria. They knew if they went into the city they

should die with famine; if they staid on the outside they must die with waiting; but they had a third way for it. Now, here faith is hung in suspense in the greatest doctrine, whether Christ is God or a creature; and it must be so in a continual practice, whether he is to be worshipped or not. Having first determined that we worship we know not what, they at last leave us undetermined whether there should be any worship or none! He that is against the worship of Christ calls it idolatry, and he that is for it proves it so; for his next proposition is this: "That Jesus Christ in both natures, and not in one only, is to be considered as the object of that worship which Christians are to pay him."

This is destroying natural and revealed religion together. The human nature of Christ never received any worship. Christianity has not advanced any thing so monstrous as an opposition to the first principle of all religion. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." This is one of our best arguments against the superstition of the Papists, the splutter they make with crucifixes and transubstantiation; for if the body of Christ were really there, they ought not to adore it. But these new schemes will bring us into our old abominations; and by breaking the bonds of a Divine authority asunder, they prepare us for a return under that yoke, that neither we nor our fathers were able to bear.

Another proposition of this author's, which he gives as the ground of what I have now considered, is but a broken reed to it. He saith, that 'the grand reason the Scripture gives why we are to worship the Son, is because the Father has appointed us so to do, and has given him a right to our worship.' But did the Father ever appoint us to worship a creature? Has he not, both in the Old and New Testament, challenged all religious worship to himself, always professing that he will not give his glory to another? Has he changed his mind after so many oaths? for he has sworn by himself, and the word is come out of his mouth in righteousness. Isa. xlv. 23. But besides,

has he made the human nature of Christ capable of our worship? Worship is an inward act of the soul, the employment of our faith, fear, and hope, upon certain objects; and this is often expressed in the duty of prayer, calling upon such a one, drawing nigh to him, and depending there, with an adoring esteem of his perfections; knowing that he is able and willing to help me. Now, this can never be said of any person, or any nature, that is not omnipresent; and therefore if the human nature of Christ is not so present with me on earth, as I believe the Divine is, I worship it in vain.

The Scripture has given me no room for such filthy folly as this is. I know that it is in heaven, and we cannot part with it from thence: it is always before the throne, as the Divine is always upon it; and therefore to worship this nature, is to call upon that which is not omniscient, and so cannot hear me; nor omnipotent, and so cannot help me.

Thus do men talk at random about the greatest things that ever the world had a concern in; what they are to think, and what they are to do. The heathen are charged with serving those who by nature are no Gods; and we have our dependence upon one who by nature is not so, but only by office. Or, if he is called a God, we are told that he has not what agrees with every man's notion of the supreme God, that he is not self-existent.

I am sorry to find so dangerous an expression in a book called, "Self dedication personal and sacramental," where we are exhorted to 'trust the Lord Jesus Christ with our souls, and to pray to him as the object of worship and fountain of good.' But I fear what follows will rather shock the faith of a Christian than direct it. 'It is true,' saith the author, as if he was afraid his readers should overdo it in their duty to Christ, 'he is the begotten of the Father, and sent of the Father, and the Father is greater than he, and the head of Christ is God. The Son derives of the Father, and is not properly self-existent.' And it makes the matter still worse, for those passages out of the Atha-

nasian and Nicene creeds that have always been understood for an opposition to this notion, to be thrown into the margin as a defence of it.

To talk of one that is eternal God being derived from another, is to throw out a vile contradiction. If it is to be understood of his mediation, or his office as a servant, those places of Scripture are easy enough, that "the Father is greater than he, and the head of Christ is God." But that he who gives existence to all other things, should not be self-existent; that he by whom all the creation consists, should himself be dependent; what a confusion is this to reason, what a crush to faith?

I shall only mention one person more who has openly told us, that "the commonly received opinion about the Trinity has its best advocates among the Jesuits." In a book, which, according to his notorious modesty, he called, "The Western Inquisition," he has given us this confession of his faith: "I am not of the opinion of Sabellius, Arius, Socinus, or Sherlock; I believe there is but one God, and can be no more; I believe the Son and Holy Ghost to be Divine Persons, but subordinate to the Father; and the Unity of the Godhead I think to be resolved into the Father's being the fountain of the Divinity of the Son and Spirit."

I shall next lay before you the *arguments* they give for their opinions, and some account of the *methods* they take to promote them. And as I think the former will never convince a man that is serious, I am sure the latter will never be endured by one that is honest. I will first make one reflection upon what is offered against that good confession, "that there are three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory."

It is this; that this doctrine has been always received wherever the Christian religion has broken out in its full light, and wherever the Protestant cause has revived it. In the truth of this faith our fathers lived, in the joys of it they died; and therefore *what* Jesus

and Holy Spirit are we now called to? "Gods whom ye knew not, new gods newly come up, whom your fathers feared not," Deut. xxxii. 17, 18. Of the Rock that begat us we are growing unmindful, and have forgotten the God that formed us. And is our religion so trifling, that we shall lose it in our sleep, or change it for a dream? No; let us continue in the things that we have known and been assured of, knowing of whom we have learned them, 2 Tim. iii. 14.

I have given you, without any fraud, the opinions that have broken the peace of our churches, to the defilement of the Christian faith, and the confusion of brotherly love; an argument, that wisdom must first be pure before it can be peaceable, gentle, or easy to be entreated, James iii. 17. I have not acted in the way that these men use with others, but have used their own words in full quotations. The sum of what they say you may take in these four particulars.

1. They are agreed that the name *God* is given to Christ in the Holy Scriptures; but it is a poor and scandalous hypocrisy which they come into upon this head. One while declaring that they are as much for the Divinity of Christ as others, and yet upon some occasions speaking of his title with all the diminution that can be. Such an uncertain declaration is that, when persons say "they are for *the proper Divinity* of our Saviour," though they knew that by proper Divinity, one side means the same with what is ascribed to the Father, and the other no more than may be affirmed of a creature. We have renounced these hidden things of dishonesty, and dare not walk in craftiness, or handle the word of the Lord deceitfully, but by a manifestation of the truth would commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

2. They say, notwithstanding their calling him God, that he is not self-existent, that he derives from the Father, and that they have no other way to secure the unity of the Divine nature, but by affirming there is no more than one person, who is truly and eternally God. It is here that the ways part; upon this

question we are divided, whether the Scripture in calling Christ *God*, means any less than it does in calling the Father God.

We have no controversy whether he has the name or no, or whether a creature may not have it. They yield the former to us, and we the latter to them; and therefore it would be the shortest, as well as the fairest way, to examine, whether the Holy Spirit has taught us to make any abatement in calling our Saviour God, which it would be blasphemy to suppose when we speak of the Father. In that view I have all along proceeded quite through this copious argument. You have heard what the Scripture has said about his Divinity under those several heads: and I have shown you, that the Arian has no more reason to diminish the sense of those passages that relate to the Son, than an atheist has to curtail and darken those that speak of the Father: that it is as easy to argue from the Bible that there is no God at all, as to deny the testimony that is given to our Saviour's Deity.

We think that none can be called God, in the true and proper sense of the word, but One who is supreme, self-existent, underived, 'unoriginated,' as some love to speak in their great swelling words of vanity. That there is a God whom we read of under these characters is plain; and therefore we should be guilty of robbery, to lessen or contract the sense of those Scriptures that are brought to prove it. What an injurious way of expounding would that be, for me to say, Though I read of "the mighty God Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, the Father of lights, without any variableness or shadow of turning," it is possible these words may not signify a Supreme Being, and an original perfection!

And yet thus unfairly must we act with the same expressions concerning Christ Jesus, if we dispose of his character into their scheme. That is, when he is called "the mighty God," it must be only a derived Deity, though if the word was not used of him, it would signify what it sounds. Thus "the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness nor shadow

of turning," must be an independent, unchangeable, and eternal Being, and they say right; but if "Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," though the titles are equal, they do not signify so much. Those Scriptures are exactly upon a level: "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God," and he is "the mighty God, the everlasting Father," and "his goings forth have been of old from everlasting," Psal. xc. 2; Isa. ix. 6; Mic. v. 2. We read of God, that he is "blessed for ever," and of Christ, in the same epistle, that he is "over all, God blessed for ever," Rom. i. 25; ix. 5.

3. They are divided, as I have shown you, about the worship that is paid to him. The Bible stares them so full in the face, that it is declaring their sin as Sodom to deny him that devotion which his people have hitherto given him. The disciples worshipped him after he was parted from them, and the saints do in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus, Luke xxiv. 52; 1 Cor. i. 2. On the other hand, this practice is so unwieldy to their scheme, that some of them quite disown it, and others are forced to soften it with a distinction that the Scripture has taught us to abhor, of a supreme and subordinate worship.

4. So that what they glory in as their peculiarity and purgation from Arianism, is nothing but a little dust thrown into the eyes of the world. They will not say as the Arians, there was a time when the Son was not; but they tell us that he was derived, and that whatever is derived, began to be; and I am sure, whatever had a beginning, once was not. This is plunging into contradictions merely to avoid a name. It is to no purpose that they tell us there was not the least moment of time when the Son and the Spirit were not; for what is the consequence of that, from those that deny him to be self-existent, but a principle that overthrows the very first maxim of our doctrine against the atheists.

We plead that there must have been a principal cause of all things, and that he must have existed when nothing else did; that his existence proves him

to be the original of all things: but now we find there are two other persons who have existed equally with him, though they are infinitely unequal to him; that is, they are as much eternal as he. There never was a moment when the Son and the Spirit were not, which is as much as can be said of the Father; and yet being from everlasting, which proves the Father to be the first and independent cause, does not prove the Son and the Spirit so! What is the consequence of that, but that it proves nothing at all? As, for example, when I argue for the being of a God, and the glorious perfections of his nature, I put it thus: He that is before all things, and by whom all things consist, is the supreme original essence; but the great God is before all things, and by him all things consist. I should have thought the first of these propositions would have stood unmoved through all the ages and parts of the world, but our new scheme has given it up: for "Christ is before all things, and by him all things consist," and yet, nevertheless, he is God only, as we are beings, by derivation, though "of him, and to him, and through him are all things." Rom. xi. 36.

I know not what these people will leave us; the doctrines of revealed religion "are not," and will they take away the principles of nature too? "all these things are against" us. Do we not only lose our Saviour from the throne of God, but are we to quit the very notion itself under which we have conceived of a God? Shall we, in complaisance to a blasphemous whim, say that a person may be "the Creator of the ends of the earth, the mighty God, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending," that he may be "over all, blessed for ever," that he is "before all," and yet not self-existent? Are these perfections separable from the Divine nature? Can one be all this, and not be a God? or, if he is called a God upon these accounts, must the word signify less in him than it does in another? Shall the Scripture, which we reckon to be the best book in the world, leave us no distinction, either in our language or our practice, between the first cause

and the chief of second causes; between him that is derived and him that is not? The Mahometans have none of this difficulty in their Koran; they do not pretend to call their prophet by the name of God. And has the only Divine Book that is given to men, left them confused, where above all things they ought to be most determined? Are we, like the Samaritans, worshipping "we know not what?" or, with the Athenians, setting up an altar to an "unknown God?"

The question whether Christ is God or no, enters into the very life of our devotion; it is impossible we should take one right step till this is cleared; because if he be, we may neglect to honour him as God, and if he is not, we may worship more than the true God. We think the Scripture has made it evident enough; but if the noblest expressions are distinguished away, and the calling him God is not to be understood of his being so, let us never talk of a veil upon the hearts of the Jews and the Mahometans. No; Christianity, according to this scheme, is the most clouded religion in the world, where we are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. But I must remember my promise; and that is,

II. To lay before you the reasons they give for their opinion, that Christ is not self-existent. And the plea lies in less room than perhaps you imagine. For,

1. They mightily insist upon what is never denied, that he is inferior to the Father; and to that end bring in swarms of scriptures that are nothing at all to the purpose, but must every one of them be understood either of his human nature or his mediatorial office. This is no part of the question, nor ever was, whether or no in some sense or other the Son is not subordinate to the Father. It is universally owned, that he was "made of a woman, and made under the law." In this respect he is a creature; a body has God prepared for him. And to this head you may place a vast number of sentences: that "the Father is greater than he," that "the head of Christ is God,"

that He is "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," that "the Son himself is made subject."

If they bring in these to confront what is said of his Divinity, it is trifling with the argument. They may as well plead against the immortality of the soul, that man was made of the dust of the earth. This is a sorry shuffle, to contradict what is said of one part by what we read about the other. Christ, as in the form of a servant, is not so much as a subordinate God; in that respect he is no God at all, but as Mediator between God and man, he is "the man Christ Jesus." So that, here you may keep your stand, and tell them, that the question is not whether the Son is a creature, and inferior to the Father, as he appeared in our nature, and as he undertook our cause. To prove that the Scripture has said this of him, is only a laborious impertinence.

It is an unhandsome insinuation to say, that for one text that speaks of him as God, there are a hundred that declare him to be subordinate. The reason of that is plain, because the chief revelation we have of him is as Mediator. We read very little of his original and absolute perfections; but the question is, Whether there is not one passage in all the Bible that represents him as equal to the Father? If there is but a single text to this purpose, the doctrine must be true. We can easily understand such a scripture in harmony with those of a different sound. These words, "I and my Father are one," must refer to another nature than what he speaks of, when he saith, "My Father is greater than I." John x. 30. The Jews would never have charged him with making himself "equal with God," had he talked of nothing higher than his human soul and body. When he speaks of his dying, he could not be supposed to give that as an evidence of any more than a created nature; that was not making himself God. But it is plain, besides this, he uses other language which they thought too much for a creature.

And therefore keep the adversary to this point; let him not wander into the proofs of what you do not

deny. Remember the question is, Whether the Holy Spirit has not spoken of him in the same language that he does of the Father? and this Spirit that bears witness of him is *truth*. If they tell you that the words do not signify so much when applied to the Son, examine whether the Bible itself has given you any foundation for making the difference. "Hold fast that you have, and let no man take away your crown."

2. Another argument used for this opinion is, that to suppose the Son is God in the true sense of the word, is to make him the same person with the Father. Thus we may behold them pleading in full career. One author tells us, that it is absurd to suppose that Christ made satisfaction to himself, that he was both the giver and the receiver of the price. And what does all this amount to? Has it any other force than from our unacquaintedness with the mysteries of the Divine nature? Does it prove any more than that we cannot by searching find out God, that we cannot find out the Almighty to perfection? Job xi. 7.

(1.) Must that be laid down as a maxim, that nothing can be true of the Deity, but what appears likely to human reason? "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" Are we not "uttering things we know not, things too wonderful for us, that we understand not," Job xxxviii. 2; xlii. 3. It is no part of the question, whether the doctrines we have concerning God are such as we should have thought most probable; but whether they are revealed or not. If he has told us some things of himself which appear very inconceivable, it is no offence to my faith, that the Divine nature is not to be comprehended by the human; that he is not such a one as I am; that something may consist with the unity of his essence, that would not do so with mine.

Indeed I ought not to receive any thing concerning God which appears unlikely, upon the testimony of man, because such a one intrudes into what he has not seen; he is wise above what is written. But the

record that God himself has given us, is about things that he has seen. And therefore, I have no other inquiry than this, whether he has *said* it or not? If he has, my faith does not assent to it, upon the rational objective evidence that I have of the thing itself, but upon the veracity and wisdom of him who has revealed it.

I could make a thousand objections against the resurrection of the dead; and such difficulties go along with it, as perhaps we shall never answer till we come to the thing itself; but no doctrine is the less true for its being incomprehensible. Suppose I ask, with what body shall I arise? what becomes of that which gave this flesh and bones a consistence, when they are both reduced to dust, or it may be, converted to another form? If I am to have this body again, what is it for? What will be its proper food? it was made for the supports of meat and drink, before the defilements of sin: hunger and thirst are not owing to the fall: how then is it to be the same body I now have, and yet have none of the subsistence that it now enjoys?

Such questions as these would multiply, a new swarm would rise out of every one of them. But what then? Is there to be no resurrection because I cannot explain it? Does my reason stand centinel to my faith, that what the one will not admit, the other dare not receive? No; this is quite destroying the nature of faith, which is an assent to a proposition upon the testimony of another. I believe the resurrection, not because it is a thing likely, but purely because it is told me in plain and easy words: it is not a thing incredible with me that God *can* raise the dead, but it would have been very incredible that he *will* do so, if he himself had not said it, Acts xxvi. 8.

And just so it is here: there is nothing that I have in nature fit to illustrate, and much less to prove, that three are no more than one, and one no less than three. And I wish that the fancies of men had been more sparing and modest upon this head. Explain-

ing a mystery is nonsense; proving it is dutiful. I have no more to do with a mystery than to show that it is so; but it ceases to be mysterious, if I can show *how* it is. I am very sensible that to say that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were one in nature, makes them three men; and I must own that no testimony but that of Scripture could have taught us to say, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are but one God.

If he has not told us this, it is not true; but never let us go that way to work, to suppose that he has not said it, merely because we cannot understand it. If the question had been to Nicodemus, whether Jesus Christ really spoke of the new birth, he would have owned he did. His difficulty was not upon that head, whether Jesus spake so or not, but upon the truth of the doctrine itself, "How can these things be? Can a man enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Now if he had believed both the wisdom and the truth of this person that told him so, that he could not be deceived himself, and would not deceive another, he must have been satisfied about the matter, though he knew not how to conceive of it.

(2.) You may further observe, that in this argument they will not attend to the distinction of two natures in the Mediator, and of three persons in the Deity, which we always assert. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man." It is an unhappiness that we are forced to repeat a thousand times what these people are resolved to take no notice of. It looks as if they were sworn to deafen us with noise, like those at Ephesus, who cried out for two hours together, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

What signifies it to urge, that making the Son God is supposing him to be the person who both gives and receives the satisfaction, and that is making him the Father? as if they were resolved to bully us out of the doctrine we contend for, and thought that a mere noise of words would persuade us we had actually given up what they themselves are angry with us for holding fast. Do not we always observe the distinction of persons, when we speak of the work of

redemption? Is not that one of the things in question, whether the Father and the Son are really distinct? And must we be charged with denying this, at the same time that we take all the pains we can to affirm it? Are they resolved that we shall say there is but one person, merely because we say there is but one Divine nature, though they hear so often from us that there are three? But,

(3.) It shows that men are unpersuadable, when they will admit no medium between Sabellianism and Tritheism; that is, if we will not deny three Persons, they say we must assert three Gods. This is the hardest usage that people can meet with, when no confessions, protestations, or subscriptions can avail us against the noise of impudence. The declaration that all the Protestant churches came into at the time that God began to stir the world with a concern about religion, is equally against both these errors. And though the phrases are a little different, yet the sense of them all strikes upon this single point, that 'There is one only living and true God, and that there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance (or essence,) and equal in power and glory.' If, notwithstanding all this, they resolve that we shall be either against three persons, or for three Gods, they only give the greater evidence of being wicked and unreasonable men; which the apostle affirms of the men that have not faith. They are like the person whom Solomon tells us of, that he is not to "be corrected with words; for though he understand he will not answer." False witnesses rise up, and lay to our charge things that we know not. And yet,

(4.) If we do say, that Christ gave satisfaction to himself, I do not see that it is such a gross way of speaking as these polite men would persuade us; for we must still take the Scripture to be a "form of sound words," and that tells us, that Christ presents the church to "himself," and that he will present us "faultless before the presence of his (αὐτου, *his own*)

glory." Eph. v. 27; Jude 24. I cannot imagine there is any contradiction in such a phrase as this, though it lies as open to the petulancy of their remark as that at which they are so angry.

3. Another of their pleadings is, that their scheme is most agreeable to the light of nature, and the language of the old philosophers. I shall answer this in two particulars.

(1.) I partly believe it; for there is something in their way that comes nearer to an excellency of speech and wisdom than the apostle had a mind to. Theirs are not words that the Holy Ghost teaches; and indeed the account I have met with of ancient writers, abundantly convinces me, that what they are contending for, is but so much foreign foam brought into the Christian faith.

I will lay before you some opinions of the learned men among the Egyptians and Persians, and leave you to compare them with what we hear of a supreme and a derived God, and the one being the instrument of the other in the work of creation. Mercurius Trismegistus says with Zoroaster, that 'the Father of all things produced not the world by his own hands, like a workman, but by *the word;* and that this word which proceeds from him, communicating its fecundity to nature, has given the water a power of generation and production.' They tell us of 'a supreme Being, or the only God who existed before the Creator of the world, remaining in the solitude of his unity: that it was not the Father who produced 'the universe, for he was superior to the Creator.' Again, we are told, that 'the Egyptians acknowledged the second person inferior to the first, who, though he never was separate from him, yet he received his ideas of him. He was no production, but the *emanation* of the first God. He was the agent of the universe, and therefore called Δημιεργος, the master of the world.' This is the very name that the ancient heretics gave him.

And because a certain author, who out of the abundance of his heart has set his tongue a speaking, and his pen a rambling, has laid his charge against me,

of writing as vile things of the Christian religion as Porphyry, the known enemy of that doctrine, ever did; I will give you an account of what Porphyry's sentiment was, and you shall judge who comes nearest him. He is quoted by Cyril of Alexandria, as saying that 'the first power has produced the intellect, or word, unspeakable to man by whom are all things, who came out of the Deity, who shone forth before all ages, who is eternally before all time, for there was no time when he first appeared. It was not by any command, or even by an act of the will that the Deity brought him forth, but by a necessary emanation.'

Thus wrote the great enemy of Christianity then, thus write the perverters of Christianity now. But, are we to be turned from the truth to Jewish fables, and Egyptian darkness? Are we to learn our religion from those that knew not God, but became vain in their imaginations, and had their foolish hearts all over darkened? We are bid to "beware lest any man beguile us by philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, after the commandments of men, and not after Christ." Have they got the Egyptian follies with their mummies? Are they resolved to seek the living among the dead? Was there any need of Christ as a teacher, and the Spirit as a leader into the way of all truth, if instead of hearkening to them we must seek to wizards that peep and mutter? "But, when men turn away their ears from the truth, they are turned to fables; not only to a falsehood in the matter of their doctrine, but to a fabulous silly way of telling it. With a contempt, and a very just one, does the apostle call them "old wives' fables," that are equally opposite to sense and godliness.

(2.) Is this scheme of theirs so very agreeable to reason? Do not they tell us of a God who did not create the world in person, but only by proxy? Must we not hence conclude, that creation is not the work of an almighty, but a derived power? and that it ceases to be, what all ages have hitherto made it, the

argument of a Deity? We worship and bow down before the Lord our Maker. Know that the Lord he is God; it is he that has made us, and not we ourselves. The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead. Psal. xcv. 6; c. 3; Rom. i. 20. Is it not very strange, that God himself should give us a book, that we might have eternal life in the knowledge of him, and of Jesus Christ, whom he has sent; and that we should read of Jesus Christ in the same fulness and glory of language that is used for himself; and yet be obliged to take the same word in different senses? that we must not know whether he is God or a creature? whether he is to be worshipped or not? have no bounds set to our veneration of him, and to keep it from rising into idolatry?

We will now take a little more compass in examining whether this new scheme is so very agreeable to human reason, and whether the dignity of our nature will be most secured by faith or by unbelief. The doctrine they contend for is this, 'That the Father produced the Son, the Arians say, by creation; and these younger brethren say it is by emanation. The Father and Son made the Spirit, and the Father left it to the Son to create the world, and to the Spirit to sanctify the church.'

This is the notion which they set out with all the pomp that their learning is able to give it, as more scriptural and rational than a Trinity of Persons, who are "the same in substance, and equal in power and glory." But does not every one see that,

1. This is running into the old Egyptian folly, which represented the Supreme God as altogether inactive, a lumpish Deity, who did nothing himself, but committed all the affairs of nature and worship to deputies and vicegerents? Our Lord tells us, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." And, "By faith we understand that the worlds were made by the word of God." "He spake, and it was done; he

commanded, and it stood fast." John v. 17; Heb. xi. 3; Psal. xxxiii. 9. His people, who had their instructions from himself, were always taught to approach him as "the Lord their Maker." They looked upon themselves as "the work of his hand, and the sheep of his pasture." We are to conceive of creation as the produce of an infinite agent. It is the LORD who "stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him." Zech. xii. 1. His providential kingdom rules over all; he gives out the word indeed, and great is the company of those that publish it; but he himself is "the former of all things, the Lord of hosts is his name." He made the earth by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his understanding. We must fear God, and give glory to him, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of waters. His hands have made and fashioned us round about. He is said to make the morning darkness, and tread upon the high places of the earth, and to declare unto man what is his thought. None of the vanities of the heathen can give rain, neither can the heavens of themselves give showers. Art not thou He, O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon thee, for thou hast made all these things. Rev. xiv. 7; Job x. 8; Amos iv. 13; Jer. xiv. 22.

The revelation of the Bible never taught us to consider the world as any thing else but the effect of the great God. He set it in his heart, contrived the model, and afterwards looked on all things that he had made, and behold they were very good. And is not this a more useful notion, that creation was the immediate agency of the supreme cause, than to dream, as the heathen did according to the vanity of their mind, that he was obliged to employ servants? They thought of the Divine nature just as they did of the human; that activity was an expense and fatigue. But this is owing to the impurity of their imaginations; for we know that "the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary, and there is no searching of his understanding." Isa. xl. 28. It

was no difficulty to him; he did it all by his word, and by the breath of his mouth.

Creation is to us a visible argument of the invisible things of Him that wrought it, "even his eternal power and Godhead." Rom. i. 20. But if we suppose that he built the world, as Solomon did the temple, only by appointing others, there is nothing in the argument. Creation ceases to be the evidence of an almighty power, and proves no more than a commission issued out to an inferior. It is not the work of a Deity, but of a delegate. Whereas, we find a Person in the Divine nature distinct from Christ, and speaking to him, representing himself as the author of the universe: "Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which comes out of it; he that gives breath to the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein." Isa. xlii. 5, 6. That this is to be understood of the Father, you will see by the next words, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the gentiles."

How vain must the apostle's discourse have been at Athens, if he had carried any disciples of this new scheme in his train? His doctrine was, "Him whom ye ignorantly worship, declare I unto you." And who was that? "the God that had made the world, and all things therein, the Lord of heaven and earth." Might not a Grecian have pulled him back from that assertion, and said, 'It is true God appointed the world to be made; and *that* Jesus, whom your doctrine speaks of, was the trustee of the whole affair.' But the apostle was a stranger to these profane babblings; he looked upon heaven and earth as the immediate work of the great God, who had made of one blood all nations of men; in whom we live, and move, and have our being, and who is therefore not far from any of us.

Indeed, both the Son and the Spirit, in different places of Scripture, are spoken of as the efficients of

the creation, but without any subordination to the Father: for, as it is sometimes said, that "God created all things by Christ Jesus," so it is as plain that Christ himself was the supreme Creator, as you have heard at large. Creation itself is God's own "making all things out of nothing by the word of his power." And which is the most reasonable to say, with the Scripture, that he who made all things out of nothing was the Supreme Cause, or, with these men, that he was only an officer appointed by him?

2. This scheme has made a clumsy distribution of the works committed to the Son and Spirit. They suppose that the former is charged with the creation of the world, and the latter with the religion of it, and yet they speak of the Son as the maker of the Spirit. Now, lay all these together, and you will conclude that the lower the agent, the greater the work. What the Son does, in their range of notions, is no way comparable to what the Spirit does, so that we are quite struck off from saying with David, "Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord, neither are there any works like unto thy works." Psal. lxxxvi. 8.

What is that notion that we feel within ourselves, or see displayed before our eyes? what are these visible heavens, and this earth, that is so full of God's glory, if you match them with the more important work that is produced in every believer? It is more to make a saint, than it is to make a world. When God caused light to shine out of darkness at first, he did less than causing the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ to shine into our hearts. It is a greater "day of his power" to make us "willing," than to make us living souls.

And is it not strange that he to whom they deny the name of a God, should be charged with the most wonderful things that are ever to be done? The Son rejoices in the creation that he has wrought; but this is all to vanish. These heavens that are so bright a volume, and which he has filled with so many glories, are to be rolled up, as a scroll, to pass away and be

no more. And yet one whom they suppose to be a lower agent, does nothing but what is for eternity. So that according to this, which they will needs pass upon us for *rational religion*, at the consummation of all things, the nobler efficient shall have nothing to show, and one that is inferior will have his whole performance about him. The great God takes care of the world; he satisfies the earth with his works; he gave the horse his strength, he clothed his neck with thunder; he gave the goodly wings to the peacock, and feathers to the ostrich; the rain calls him Father, he alone has begotten the drops of dew. Either he did all these things immediately, or he committed them to the Son. Well, of this there will be no remains in that eternity of fulness and glory that his people are going into.

The Spirit is beneath the Son; he must have a lower nature, and therefore, one would think, a lower charge. Now, what does he do? I answer, from him we have the Scriptures. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." This is more than the visible heavens; for the heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one tittle or *iota* of what he has inspired shall be lost for ever. And again, all that the Spirit does in us, as well as for us, shall be immortal.

The Son is now surrounded with a vast creation. "There is not any number of his armies, and upon whom does not his light arise?" But when all these are sunk, every one that is born of the Spirit is to be an everlasting attendant upon his throne. "God gives to every seed his own body," says the Apostle, and these all come from him; but such as the Spirit has formed, are "born of the incorruptible seed that lives and endures for ever." 1 Pet. i. 23.

So that, upon the whole, this is their scheme. 'He that is truly, absolutely, and properly God, does nothing at all in us and for us immediately by himself. He that is next him, and has the name of God, gives us all the benefits that are of a lower sort, many of which shall perish with the life we are now in.

But here is a third, that has neither the nature nor the title of God, and no claim to Divine worship, and yet He is the author of our best and all our immortal benefits!' Indeed I cannot think their scheme has made a fair partition, unless they believe, as I am afraid they do, it is a greater thing to be a man than to be a saint, and will deny that the works of the Spirit are superior to those of nature and providence. But we are taught to say, that "he who has wrought us for the self-same thing is God." "It is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." "It is God who causes us to triumph in Christ Jesus." "We are the epistle of Christ, written with the Spirit of the living God." 2 Cor. v. 5; Phil. ii. 13; 2 Cor. ii. 14; iii. 3.

3. These fancies are chiefly owing to philosophy and vain deceit. Whereas, God sent not his apostles to preach with wisdom of words; for it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent: where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; for it is written, He takes the wise in their own craftiness; and again, The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise that they are vain. 1 Cor. i. 17. 19—21; iii. 19, 20.

Many of the ancient writers for the Christian religion had a great mind to bring their *Platonic* notions into the mysteries of our faith. They had a science falsely so called, which some professing, have erred concerning the faith. They had read more than the unlearned part of the church could do, and had not come with the apostle to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord. Phil. iii. 8. Besides, they thought that was the way to bring in the heathen, and make our doc-

trines pass the better upon them, when they saw how little they differed from their own.

But how desirable soever the affluence of numbers to the Christian church might be, yet it is a pity to spoil the faith for their sakes. They must be brought to the rule, and not the rule to them. We have reason enough to fear, that this wisdom of words which they admitted into their preaching made the cross of Christ of none effect. The doctrine of Christ forced its way with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power, whilst it was not attended with the enticing words of man's wisdom; and if ever the purity and simplicity of this truth are to be confounded with the notions which man's wisdom teaches, philosophy cannot "countervail the king's damage," or restore what it has taken away. For our faith is not to stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. 1 Cor. ii. 5.

4. Another grand objection is taken from that mysterious word that the Holy Spirit is pleased to make use of, in calling Christ "the begotten of the Father." The liberty that is used with that phrase has so much in it of filthiness and foolish talking, that we ought not without the severest caution to take it into our lips. Upon this they found their notion of his being "derived."

(1.) You are very sensible this measuring an infinite nature by a finite, is the way to plunge at once into confusion and blasphemy. "These filthy dreamers defile the flesh." The great God has been pleased to make use of that language that obtains among ourselves, but it is impossible to understand him in such a sense as the words must have in the human nature, without becoming "vain in our imaginations." We must give up every perfection of the Deity, if we do not throw out of these phrases all those things that signify the weakness of a creature. Thus, his having hands and eyes and feet, may be pleaded against his being a spirit, as they are by some Socinian writers. The words of anger, grief, revenge, pity, and love, would hurry us to believe, that He is of like passions

with ourselves, if we did not control the sound of them with this thought, that he is God and not man.

With these guards and distinctions ought you to consider that awful term that the Holy Spirit has adopted into his own Book. For though we read of Christ as "the only begotten of the Father," yet "who shall declare his generation?" As the word itself cannot possibly signify that in the Divine nature that it does in the human; methinks it is revealed on purpose to stun the imagination of men, and show them that it means something which they know not. Agur, perhaps, had given too much way to these inquiries, for which he saith, "I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man; I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy." We may suppose of what nature these things are that he was ignorant of, by the next words, "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?" Prov. xxx. 2—4.

(2.) That it does not signify a derivation of nature in the way that it must do when we use it of one another, is plain from all those Scriptures that speak of Christ as they do of the Father. He would never have been called "Alpha and Omega, The first and the last, The beginning and the ending," or be said to be "from everlasting," and "before all things," if his being was received from another. It destroys indeed the Sabellian fancy, and proves him to be distinct from the Father, for the word Son carries in it the name of another person; and though in us it would signify a beginning, yet we cannot admit it in him, without contradicting those passages in the Bible that tell us quite the contrary. He cannot be "the everlasting Father," if he is a derived Son, nor is he "before all things," if any thing was before him.

(3.) The most apparent design of the word, I think, is to express an identity or sameness of nature be-

tween the Father and the Son; that we are to conceive of the one as we do of the other. To be sure, this was never designed to explain the *manner* of his derivation, and therefore I see no necessity to understand it of any derivation at all. For whenever it is used among creatures, it is to tell us that the being is exactly the same in the parent and the offspring. The time of existence is only a circumstance. The last child that was born into the world has the same human nature with Adam himself; and the characters of priority and subjection, of coming sooner or later, being stronger or weaker, make no difference in the nature itself. The son is as much a man as the father; and it would be an odd way of arguing, when I say that a man and his son are equal in nature, by which I mean they are equally rational, spiritual, and immortal, and whatever is essential to the human nature, for any to cut me short, and say, that the father was before the son. That does not enter into the question; human nature is the same in a child as in a parent, in a subject as in a king. All these individuals have no other distinction among them but what is circumstantial; as to the nature itself they are equal, the same in essence.

Now, though priority and succession are neither essential nor contradictory to the human nature, yet they are so to the Divine. It is necessary in God that he be the first, "before all things;" and therefore, though one who has a beginning may be very glorious, yet he cannot be God, because he must want that which is the grand essential of Deity. So that the question is not, whether Christ has a glorious capacity above every other being, whether he has not an existence before them, and inconceivably above them. This still does not denominate him a God.

If he is begotten of the Father, and yet has not the same nature with the Father, the word must be taken in a sense that it never would bear any where else. If it is designed to express a derivation, it expresses what the Father has not, nay, what is oppo-

site to his nature—a downright contradiction to every notion of Deity; and I cannot apprehend, that in making the Son an inferior, I shall ever answer the title of his being "the only begotten Son of God." Upon the whole, the word is to signify something; the *manner* of derivation it can not, the *time* it does not; and if it signifies the *derivation* itself, it argues a different nature, for a communicated divinity is a jar upon what we always mean by divinity.

(4.) It is certain, that this word is applied to some periods that cannot refer to the Son's derivation of an existence from the Father. His miraculous conception in the Virgin Mary, is brought as one ground of the title. "Therefore that holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." Luke i. 35. The stand that the Socinians make here, we all of us know; they tell you, that at this time he began to be; but that is an error out of fashion at present: another is uppermost in the wheel, though I believe it will not continue long so. Will any one, now, say from this Scripture, that the only reason of his being called the Son of God, was such a conception? Had he not the title antecedent to it and independent of it?

Another period is his resurrection. Then he was "declared to be the Son of God with power," Rom. i. 4; but the phrase itself plainly signifies not his entering into the name, but giving it a new discovery and manifestation. The Apostle applies what David had said so long ago to that period, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;" but will they say that the word signifies a derivation in this place? Was that indeed the day of his birth? Had he no existence till then? Every one gives up this meaning of the phrase; it is too gross to be contended for in *that* Scripture, though they make it necessary in others; and therefore you need do no more upon their boasted argument, than change the situation of it. As, for example, they plead, 'He that was begotten was derived—the word can signify nothing but a communication of being;' try whether it does or not

upon the passage I have now given you: God spake of a certain time, "This day have I begotten thee;" that is, according to them, 'This day thou hast received thine existence;' and therefore, if the word can bear no other sense but a derivation of being, it must signify that Christ began to be at his resurrection!

It is plain, that in this Scripture it cannot refer to a communication of nature, for he was the Son of God in every sense of the word before; and therefore that interpretation of the phrase is not necessary in all places which is impossible in one. If it must not signify derivation in this text, it may not do so in another. And perhaps the Holy Spirit has used it thus on purpose to show us that He never meant by it, what one that is carnally minded tells us he does. It is essential to God that he be underived; and so it must be to him who is the only begotten of the Father. If they have the Divine nature equally, it is in all its perfections.

III. The methods they take to oppose the truth are such as no integrity will allow of. I omit their walking in slanders, saying the most they can against an author, when they can say nothing against his arguments; throwing dirt at the man in hopes of blasting the cause. These are arts that may take in the hurry of a dispute, but they will either be matter of repentance with the grace of God, or of reproach without it. Such methods are always the scandal of a good interest, and a dead weight to a bad one. No lie can be of the truth, or capable of doing it any good. The ways they are put to are such as these.

1. They take all the pains they can to disguise the question; they love to use ambiguous phrases, and keep the sense of them undetermined; that if they cannot convince you, they may have it in their power to retreat, and say they do not contradict you. This unmanly fraud is the whole spirit of their books, lurking and shuffling under deceitful words; which method I will show you they are guilty of, and expose it with the contempt it deserves.

2. Another of their arts, that the lovers of a righteous cause will despise, is this, to pretend all along that the doctrine we are striving for has no foundation in Scripture, but has its whole authority from councils and creeds and catechisms. The falsehood of this charge we can easily show to any ingenuous person, though the people that make it are hardened against all conviction.

3. The mysteries of our religion are reproached as so many breaches of free thinking; that they are only a set of thoughts that have slid into us by education; what we have never examined, but take for granted at a venture.

4. In pursuit of their cause, they go searching into books, and bring out passages directly opposite to the design of the authors. The disingenuousness of this practice is too gross for any but the advocates of a corrupt cause to admit of.

5. Their desiring the doctrines may be delivered in the express words of Scripture, is another stale artifice to deceive the simple. As this was never their own practice, it can be no more than a vain delusion.

6. Their intimations that a love of charity and more enlarged notions of liberty are the credit of their scheme, is what I will examine.

7. The contempt with which they speak of mysteries, and their ways to dull the regard of men to the worship of God, is the most powerful of all their arts. "They allure through the lusts of the flesh those that were clean escaped from them who live in error."

8. The poor shuffle of denying themselves to be Arians, and reconciling their schemes to the creeds they abhor, is such an avowed dissimulation, that we may wonder that the very name of *sincerity* should ever come out of their mouths.

If there is a design to assault the first article of your religion, if these are the arguments, and these the methods of those that are in it, what need have you to be established! The war has spread itself far and near; he must be a stranger in Israel that knows

not these things. Do, therefore, as they would do, who live in an infected place; get a preservative, by letting "the word of God dwell richly in you;" and above all desire the protection of that Spirit who can lead you into the way of all truth. Let those that fear the Lord speak often one to another. Build up one another in your most holy faith, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual faith both of you and me, Rom. i. 12.

That these are the ways they take to show their charity and free thinking, is notorious to every one who reads what they have written. It would be as useless as voluminous, to give you all the examples that their books pour in upon us, of such an unfairness in argument, and hypocrisy in conduct. I shall briefly take notice of their practice, and show you the discord there is between the methods of this party, and those that the God of truth has directed us to, in proclaiming his gospel. The apostles gave no offence, lest the ministry should be blamed, but in all things approved themselves as the ministers of God, by pureness, by knowledge, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God. Where they had been shamefully entreated, they were still bold in God to speak the gospel of God with much contention. Their exhortation was not of deceit nor of uncleanness, nor in guile; but as they were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, so they preached, not as pleasing men, but God, who searches the hearts; neither at any time used they flattering words, nor a cloke of covetousness, 2 Cor. vi. 3, 4. 6, 7; 1 Thess. ii. 3—5.

1. I begin with the first of these accusations that you have heard, and that is their continual endeavours to disguise the question, that we may never know what it is we dispute about. Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved; but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

Christ himself "ever spake openly. These things were not done in a corner."

The opposite way argues such a diffidence of their cause as they would be unwilling to own; and therefore the proposal made to them by Dr. Waterland is what would soon bring the controversy to an end: 'dispute fairly, drop ambiguous terms, or else define them, put not gross things upon us, contemn every thing but truth, search after truth, and keep close to the question, and then it will soon be seen, whether Arianism or Catholicism be the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity.'

1st, It is a breach of this honest rule for them to trifle with the several meanings of the word GOD in Scripture; and, when we have proved that the title is given to Christ as it is to the Father, to sham us off with an arbitrary distinction between a supreme and a subordinate God. They know this is out of the question; we have no need to demonstrate that he is called God in some sense or other. They allow that, and we grant that the name is given to angels, to men, nay, to Satan himself.

But what is this to the purpose? Is it not in many places a Divine attribute, and so given to the Supreme Being, as it would be blasphemy to say it of any other? "Thou art great and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone." "I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another. His "name alone is JEHOVAH." We "have no other gods before" him; "the Lord our God is one Lord:" and therefore when we bring examples of Christ's being the great *Jehovah*, they must, in answer, do one of these two things; either they are to show that we have mistaken the Scripture, and that he has not the name; or they must remove the evidence which arises from other places, that this name is peculiar to the Most High. Their way lies fair before them, and if what they pretend to was so easy, they would never turn out of it. Let them show that there is no one name belongs to God in all the Bible, but what may be granted to him who by nature is no God. For

we can make it evident, that there is not any title under which the Father is mentioned, but somewhere else it is applied with an undistinguished fulness to the Son.

To say that it must be understood with the qualification of their note, that the one is a supreme, and the other a subordinate God, is to take for granted the thing that ought to be proved. Either the foundation for such a remark is clear in the Scripture itself, or it is not. If it is, let them show it; if it is not, let us never pretend to make the scheme more intelligible than the Holy Ghost has left it.

The Christian religion has subsisted many hundred years without their distinction, and so it can do still. He who has brought it from the womb will secure it to old age. There are indeed that are called gods, as we have gods many, and lords many; but to us there is but one God, the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. He is so called God as no creature can be; and therefore, if Jesus Christ in other places has the title of God given him without any variation of language, we must either suppose him equal to the Father, or that the Scripture leaves us confused in a matter where above all other things it ought to be clear; which would look like a breach of his promise, that we "shall all know him from the least to the greatest;" and Thomas did know him when he said, "My Lord, and my God."

2dly, It is another evidence of this fraud, when they will teaze us with the distinction of a supreme and a subordinate worship. That the duty we owe to parents, to magistrates, or any superiors, is called *worship*, cannot be denied. But certainly this also is a word which the Holy Ghost has appropriated to the homage that we pay only to God, and cannot without the foulest guilt and danger give to any other. It must in some places describe an action that can be directed lawfully to none but him that made us.

That Christ is the Mediator of the correspondence between God and us, and the medium of our approach to him, is true enough. But we are not said to wor-

ship him, when only "by him" we come to the Father. Now the question is, whether he is not frequently held forth as the ultimate object of our faith, our adoration, our inward delight and full dependence? If they say he is not, and that our worship is directed beyond him to a greater than he, let that be tried by matching the Scriptures with one another, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

If I were asked whether or not I could prove from the Bible that our religious worship should be given to none but God, and whether the Father is the proper object of it, it is easily answered. Upon that head we argue very justly, that the words, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," are as full as any can be. And if they do not command such a temper of mind towards God as we must not have to any one else, they signify nothing at all. Well, the words are as plain, the expressions as full, the command as peremptory, with respect to Christ, as they can be to the Father. Thus, when it is said, "Men began to call upon the name of the Lord;" and, "Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;" and, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will hear thee;" Gen. iv. 26; Joel ii. 32; Psal. l. 15; I see no more in these strong precepts than I do in others that relate to a Saviour. We read of those "who in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus, both theirs and ours." "All the angels of God worship him," 1 Cor. i. 2; Heb. i. 6. "Into thy hands do I commit my spirit, for thou hast redeemed it, Lord God of truth," said David, who thus died in faith, Psal. xxxi. 5. "Lord Jesus receive my spirit," Acts. vii. 59, said Stephen, who would have given it to none but one that redeemed it. "I have redeemed thee, and thou art mine," said God to Israel. "Ye are not your own, but bought with a price," says God by the apostle; and we know "the Lord that bought us," this "God who has purchased the church with his own blood," 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; Deut. xxxii. 6; 2 Pet. ii. 1. "Ye believe in God," said Christ, "believe also in me," John xiv. 1. If he

meant only a subordinate faith, it is no more than any prophet or apostle might have said as well as he. "He that has begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ;" "he that has wrought us for the self same thing is God;" and yet "Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith," Heb. xii. 2; Phil. i. 6; 2 Cor. v. 5.

3dly, It is another instance of this fraud, when they disguise the question, and tell you, our only controversy is about uncertain speculations, which lead a man out of his depth, and make him no better. This was the temper of Ephraim. God wrote to him the great things of his law, but they were counted a strange thing. Thus, how roundly is the story told, that 'we are contending whether the Trinity shall be understood of three infinite minds, and whether they are distinguished by a self-consciousness, and that these being only metaphysical niceties, people have no concern about them.' Though themselves will keep talking of the Son's being originated not self-existent, begotten not by necessity of nature, but by the will of the Father. They say, that Christ has left his religion plain and unclouded with such hard words.

You are my witnesses, whether the charge against us is true or not. Has it been our endeavour to darken the doctrine with barbarous phrases? Have we not laid it down before you, both in the evidence and the language of Scripture? Have I once attempted to enter into an explanation, *how* three are one, and one is three? And therefore you know that such an insinuation is not arguing, but railing.

That there is a distinction between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is plain, and that it amounts to what we mean by the word *person* among men; the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Spirit. And yet, that as much is said of the Son's Divinity as of the Father's, I hope has been apparent, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. That there is but one God, is as true a proposition as any of the rest. That they *seem* to contradict one an-

other is not denied; but, if they are revealed, if God has indeed given us this account of his own nature, we are to acquiesce in the report, and adore what we cannot explain. So that the question is not whether they are infinite minds, but, as a learned author has openly told them, 'They are to prove, either that the Son is not Creator, or that there are two Creators, and one of them a creature. They are to show, either that the Son is not to be worshipped at all, or that there are two objects of worship, and one of them a creature. They are to prove, either that the Son is not God, or that there are two Gods, and one of them a creature. They are to show, that this hypothesis is high enough to take in all the high titles and attributes ascribed to the Son in Scripture; and at the same time low enough to account for his increasing in wisdom, not knowing the day of judgment, and the like.'

The controversy lies in this and nothing else. And though it is indeed a needless dispute to determine what was never revealed, the manner of the distinction among the persons, and the union of the nature; yet it is no vain speculation for a Christian to know, in what sense his Saviour is a God, and with what worship he is to be regarded. Because, until this point is settled, we cannot steer safe between impiety on the one hand, in withholding worship from the true God, and idolatry on the other, in giving it to a creature. Believing, which is the great act of the soul, will be the most uncertain thing in the world; in it the Christian is doing he knows not what, his faith wanders about for an object, and, like the unclean spirit, is seeking rest and finding none. He knows that Christ in his office is no more than a Mediator, an appointed person, a delegate, a deriving and subordinate agent; but if he is any more than this, it is needful we should know it, that we may either be strong in faith, giving glory to him as a God, or not dare on the other hand to trust in one who cannot save. And can it ever be the business of ministers to keep people in the dark about this mat-

ter? When we talk of your "believing in the name of the Lord Jesus," and bid you "call upon him," must we not tell you who this Lord Jesus is? If you say he is the Messiah, is it not as needful a question, what is the Messiah, as who he is?

He is never the more the object of my faith and dependence for the name, but for having the perfections that are included in the title. Has the Holy Spirit made us ministers of the New Testament, where all is clear, and with open face we behold the glory of the Lord, to throw a veil upon our faces when we speak to you? Must we talk of a God, and have it undetermined whether he is the author of all things, or an inferior agent? Shall we press the duty of worship, and never let you know what it is, how far it may regard a Saviour, and where it should stop?

No, no, my friends, the Christian religion is no such Babel as this conduct would make it. Wizards may peep and mutter, but ministers of the gospel are to speak out. If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? so you, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? ye speak into the air. No voice is without signification; but if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be a barbarian to him that speaks, and he that speaks will be a barbarian to me, 1 Cor. xiv. 8—11. If I thought that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit were *not* the Supreme God, equal with the Father, I should not dare to be silent; but would take all the reproach that might follow a change of opinion. In this open conduct I have Christ himself for an example, as well as an object. He preached righteousness, he refrained not his lips. I am very sure that no truth of this nature, on which side soever of the question it lies, is by any means to be smothered. I must either be treacherous to the Father, or to the Son, in suffering you to continue in a false worship.

I know it is said, that the cause will lose by being too open, and so I believe it will; but that is no argument that it is of God. *His* doctrine may be ventured

out into broad daylight; it shines upon the mind from the evidence of the Bible; it strikes the conscience from the importance of the matter. I have no call to dissemble my concern for the Father's glory, if I think the Son is made equal to him in our carriage, who is not so in his own nature; and I am sure I need not be afraid to own the dignity of the Son, in all the smoke and fire that is raised against it, if I believe him to be the Most High God.

Whether we are mistaken or not, we have not dissembled with you; but being manifest unto God, I trust are manifest also to your consciences. We may walk in error, which the Arians say is an innocent thing, (though they have no mercy on an error for our Lord's Divinity,) but ye are our witnesses that we have not walked in craftiness. We handle the word of the Lord imperfectly; as we know but in part, so we prophesy in part; but we have not handled it deceitfully. "We are not as many who corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ."

2. Another of their arts is this: to pretend all along that the doctrine we strive for has no foundation in *Scripture;* but that in pleading for the Deity of Christ, we only set up the authority of councils, and are supported by the evidence of creeds and catechisms and confessions. Nay, we are told this is departing from the Protestant principles. What a noise have we had of reducing our religion to the Bible! as if thus far it had been taken out of something else. What outcries against these several ways that the churches have used to declare the truth as it is in Jesus! from whom has sounded out the word of the Lord, so that their faith to God-ward is spread abroad. I know it is urged by some who are but of yesterday, and have not prepared themselves to the search of their fathers, that the ancient councils were only assemblies of treacherous men, who, to serve the tricks and deceits of a court, had in a fraudulent way been brought together; and that their creeds were nothing else but so many monuments of their own presumption, and

engines of the emperor's tyranny; that what they have delivered as the sense of Scripture, is a doctrine that others cannot find there.

This, indeed, is very freely spoken; and I think, though your faith has no concern with the authority of any assembly, synod, convocation, or council in the world, yet, unless history has made them infamous, their names should not be taken up as a curse among us. Let them be never so great, I may say they have "in conference added nothing to me." I have called in no help from them, "that your faith might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." There were two periods of the church, which lie nearer our day; and what happened then deserves our greater attention.

First, One was that happy time, when God brought about the Reformation in so many countries at once; when he put it into the heart of the nations with a common effort to throw off the yoke of Rome. England, Scotland, France, Germany, Denmark, Poland, Sweden, Holland, Saxony, and several more, within a little time of one another, had kings, great men, common people, and vast numbers of all sorts but the priests, combining in a national way to profess the truth of God, and claim the liberty of men.

You know what a spirit of holiness this work was carried on with; many running to and fro, and knowledge increasing. If ever men were in earnest for the Protestant religion, it was when they loved it with their souls, and sealed it with their blood. Now, it is certain, every one of these enlightened countries published a confession of their faith. Their princes were not hauled into it, but willingly offered themselves among the people to subscribe with their hand to the Lord God of Israel, Isa. xliv. 5. They were not then of opinion that such human declarations are a departure from the Protestant principle, but rather the first public effect of that principle.

And it is very affecting to see, though every country had their phrases, and some confessions are much clearer, fuller, and better worded than others, yet that

they all agree in these two doctrines, a "Trinity of Persons in the Divine nature," and an "acceptance with God only upon the satisfaction of Christ." How well our generation has refined upon the ways these fathers took; whether the Protestant principles which they value, are accompanied with the same principles of courage, seriousness, wisdom, and perseverance, for which the names of our reformers are blessed; I must leave you to judge.

Secondly, Another period, in which the men of God gave themselves to this work, was chiefly in our nation about fourscore years ago; I mean the Assembly of Divines that met at Westminster. (A. D. 1643.) It was in a dark day that they were called together, when the scales seemed to swing in an uncertain way, whether bondage or liberty should be our lot, Protestantism or Popery our profession. At that time there was distress of nations with perplexity; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that were coming on the earth. There could be no temptation for men to dissemble then, when a war had begun to rage in the bowels of their nation. And it must be owned, there was in these days as great an appearance of religion as was ever known in any age or country.

At this time, that learned assembly sat. What we know of the men, either from history or their own works, makes it evident they were persons of the brightest character for knowledge and piety. And I once little expected that the party, who would not suffer them to be called *rebels*, would rise against them as a company of *creed-makers*. From them we have a "Confession of Faith," that has been received and admired all over the world for the contexture of the work and the perspicuity of the language, sound speech that cannot be condemned. They also published a "Larger Catechism," which, though an uneasy author has thought fit to revile, yet it appears to me the best summary both of doctrinal and practical divinity that is now extant in the world. And of this I would take no other way to convince *you*,

than, if it is false, must enable you to confute *me;* and that is, to read it carefully over, which I am afraid many have not done, though I do not know, next to the Holy Scripture, a better and more needful book in the universe. These great men gave us also a "Shorter Catechism," in which the principles of our religion are drawn up with a conciseness and perspicuity that I think was never yet exceeded. This indeed is what we have been trained up in, as the way in which our parents thought we should go; and it is strange, that some when they are old, are taking pains to depart from it.—Having given you this history of uncontested facts, I would observe to you these few things:

(1.) That there is not one of all these catechisms or confessions that pretends to give us any other than the Scripture doctrine. They that compiled them profess to take their sentiments out of the Bible. Whether they have done so or not, is left to the judgment of every reader. For,

(2.) The testimonies upon which the doctrine is founded, are published along with them in most of these compositions. I am sure they are so in all the works of the Assembly that met at Westminster. The Scriptures are inserted at large; and to say they impose their sense of the Bible upon all mankind is a notorious falsehood. If their opinions are wrong, themselves have opened the way for you to prove them so; and though some are determined to run us down with a charge that we make the catechism the standard of truth, there is not a child that repeats it but can tell whether he has learned the *proofs* or not; and by the proofs they never mean any thing but the Scriptures. So universal and public is the evidence, that the catechism itself is to be *proved*, and carries all the credentials it pretends to in the view of every one that reads it.

And therefore it had been fairer in the adversary, to have shown us that the expressions there do not contain the sense of Scripture, than to trifle with telling us they are not the words of Scripture. If these pro-

positions, 'There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory,' are any of them false, we may justly disown them; but every one of them is surrounded with sentences out of the Bible.

It is true, the work was composed by fallible men; they were not inspired in forming the sixth answer; and if it does not agree with the word of God, if the Scriptures they bring as a proof do not suffice, let us show the weakness of the consequence; and not make a clamor, that these were fallible men, that they might be deceived, but show, that they were erroneous men, and actually are deceived. Every proposition is either true or false, whatever language it is put into; and whether it expresses my conceptions in the best way or not, yet as far as I understand the words, I can tell whether I think it agreeable to the book of God.

(3.) I appeal to every one of you who have been my witnesses for the space of more than two years, that no human authority has ever once been insinuated as an argument of your believing that "God was manifest in the flesh." And therefore they that charge it upon us may well be asked, whether or not they have heard us put your faith upon creeds and confessions? If they say they have, you know it is talking against plain fact; and they appear to be a set of people who love and make a lie. If they have not, they only publish a sinful impertinence, and ought to be had in the contempt that is due to those who understand not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. For my part, I read every confession and creed, as I do any other work, as an evidence how far the author is acquainted with the Scriptures. They are no other than methodical summaries of the truth as it is in Jesus. If they vary from the law and the testimony, it is because there is no light in them. Therefore search the Scriptures daily, whether the things are so.

3. It is a very common vanity among those who set themselves against the Lord and his Anointed, to

call their scheme by the name of free thinking, and represent those that do not run astray with them, as a dull sort of people, who have slid into their opinions by education, take every thing upon trust, and have no other reason to believe as they do, but only because their fathers or their teachers have done so before them. The apostle advises Timothy to be upon his guard against this set of men. "Keep what is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called; which some professing, have erred concerning the faith."

Under this head I may bring in the haughty temper that has, without either thought or shame, given the brand of *enthusiasm* to the faith which has been owned by the harmonious confessions of so many churches. That they thus disdain those that will not follow them, as men of no critical learning, no generous principles, no solid reason, is notorious from their books and all their conversation. Thus they "cast abroad the rage of their wrath." Upon which I shall give you these few remarks.

(1.) It is no great argument that a cause has much foundation, when the advocates of it have so little humility. We do not find pride and vain glory among those signs of an apostle, by which they approved themselves to be the ministers of Christ. When they take the title of free thinkers, it is an appropriation of a great name to themselves, and can be no evidence that God has either called them or fitted them to the edification of mankind. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth; if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

I had rather be among those whom these polite people despise for madmen, enthusiasts, and whatever they please to call them, than be like Leviathan, a "king over all the children of pride." I could have no envy at such as Job complains of: "No doubt ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you." Though he speaks the very thought that some per-

sons have of themselves, yet it is not much to their advantage, when he adds, "I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him; the just upright man is laughed to scorn."

And that contempt with which they speak of the good men that are gone before us, does but fairly bring them within all the descriptions that Agur throws together. "There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother; there is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness; there is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up; there is a generation whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw-teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men," Prov. xxx. 11—14. It was with quite another spirit that they who served God in the gospel of his Son went abroad through the nations: not like the wicked, whose ways are always grievous, God's judgments are far above out of his sight; as for his enemies, he puffs at them; his mouth is full of cursing, deceit, and fraud, Psal. x. 5. 7. Such a temper would never have done with such a cause.

God fits men to his gospel, both in their knowledge and in their frame; he never makes grapes to grow on thorns, nor figs on thistles; by their fruits ye shall know them. The Apostles had a great deal of care upon this head, to give "no offence, that the ministry be not blamed." One of them fought at Ephesus with beasts after the manner of men, yet they knew from the first day that he came into Asia, after what manner he had been with them at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and many tears, keeping back nothing that was profitable for them, Acts xx. 18—20. He was with the Corinthians "in weakness, and in fear and much trembling." To the Thessalonians he professes the humility of his conduct, as well as the truth of his doctrine. "Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you nor of others, but we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherishes her children; ye are witnesses, and God also,

how holily, justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe," 1 Thess. ii. 6, 7. 10. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated," James iii. 17. You may be sure that the wisdom is no higher than earthy, that is, no better than sensual and devilish, that delivers its notions in gross language, and pursues them with a haughty spirit.

Every wise man is a free thinker; he desires to use the talents that God has given him, and would improve the light of other people, not to obscure but to assist his own. And therefore they who deny you that title, throw a reproach upon your nature. There must be a great deal of stupidity in you to deserve this usage, or a great deal of conceit in them to give it.

(2.) As to the charge of enthusiasm and folly, the shame of it does not so frequently fall on those that receive it, as it recoils upon them that give it. It was not the impudence of Festus that proved Paul to be mad, though it called him so, when he spake "the words of truth and soberness." What he writes to the Corinthians will let you into the opinion they had of him. "Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little; ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise." Such a temper ought to be treated with disdain.

The charge of enthusiasm has been lately advanced against a book written in defence of the Trinity, and which I perceive is only to be answered by "gnashing of teeth." The party seems to be cut to the heart with it. Here is no pretence that they have mistaken the meaning of one Scripture, that they have either blundered or shuffled in their arguments. But the author has given a bold fling of scandal, that will affect any other doctrine as well as that of the Trinity, viz. that certainty in matters of faith is all enthusiasm. And if so, as our martyrs died for they knew not what, so they died as fools do! But we know "they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word

of their testimony, when they loved not their lives to the death," Rev. xii. 11.

It is hard that people should be so free of a character to those who they think are wrong, when themselves say none can be sure of their being right. However, when an author has a mind to write against something, and dare not attack what he pretends to answer, he must give battle to his own imagination. The enthusiasm, which he sets out to the contempt of the world, is described by 'a man's not leaning to his own understanding, being taught of God, having the witness of the Spirit with his own spirit, feeling the evidence and power of religion upon his soul.' And, as these are the things that he means by it, may I ever have grace enough to be an *enthusiast!* may that which is the matter of his sport, be the subject of my experience and veneration! and then all sides will be pleased; some with a satisfaction of what they have, and others with a profane laughter at what they have not.

(3.) It is all a slander upon the truth, and those that own it, to say that the reason of our faith is the wisdom of men. Whatever value we have for those that are gone before us, yet believing must be our own act, and the effect of an evidence within ourselves. There is a vast deal of difference between saying of former generations that they may be wrong, and giving out the sentence that they were so. We bring what they have done to the rule that God has given us; and this without any reproach, because it was also a rule to them. But certainly, unless they were made standards of truth, there is no occasion to stun the world with perpetual outcries against them. If their opinions were wrong, the best way is to show it; bring them to the light that they may be reproved.

Consider who they are that these men set so much at naught; and that they may not fail to strike home at the faith, they insult the people that owned it. Perhaps indeed the ministers and professors of the last age were most of them gone off, before the men that

now arraign them had appeared; yet there are several among you old enough to know, that however they may be exceeded in what is now called politeness, yet as to a thorough sense of religion, an observation of the Lord's day, an acquaintance with Scripture, a contempt of the world, and, I will add, a disinterested love of their country, they are far from being equalled by the raw fraternity that now despise them. They owned God in their lives, and God owned them at their deaths. And though it would be an excess to set them up as standards of truth, yet there is some duty owing to that exhortation;—"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation," Heb. xiii. 7, 8. And what is that? "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever!" Their rule over you did not call for any blind obedience; what they spake to you was the word of God, and therefore follow their faith with regard to that, considering the end of their conversation, the end that they aimed at, and the end that they arrived to. What they had in view was to promote the honour of Jesus; not merely his honour as a man or Mediator, but that which gives a holiness to the one, and an importance to the other, his being "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Whatever lower opinions they held, yet in this they were steady; Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists, agreed in their confessions of faith. In the profession of this truth they moved quite through the road of life; nay, in the sweetness of it they moved into another life.

A sense of the infinite evil of sin kept them always humble, and preserved upon their minds a powerful esteem of the redemption that was equal to it. They would never bear a doctrine which made a little matter of that which cost the Son of God so dear. They fled with joy to Christ as the propitiation for their guilt, and to him as their God and portion for ever. With these professions they kept up their duty, and at last breathed out their souls.

Can we suppose God would suffer people who were

so afraid of displeasing him, and had run every hazard for his glory, to live and die in a dangerous delusion; to adore the Son, who is no more than a God by office; and not only so, but to worship the Spirit, who is no God at all? Shall the best of Christians be upon a level with the worst of heathen, who "worship and serve the creature more than the Creator?" Were they that confessed their need of the Spirit, and were always praying for his assistance, and who admired his testimony, in an error when they thought him to be God? And is the truth of his being revealed to the men that laugh at his operations? is he best known among those to whom his very name is a jest? has he instructed them whom he never sanctified? is he most liberal of his gifts to those who do most despise him? are the people that profane his name greater favourites than those that adore it?

We should never have entered into a comparison of mens' characters, if there had not risen up among us a set of people who talk of their pious fathers with disdain, though they ought to mention their names with blushing. It was by the faith which their sons set at nought, that those "elders obtained a good report." And may I be one of them who by the same faith and patience are following those that now inherit the promises!

4. That must be a poor cause that is to be served by false quotations. Passages are brought out of books directly opposite to the design of the authors. False witnesses rise up against them, and lay to their charge things that they know not. Of these I have lately given several examples in a public work, which has had the most natural effect upon the guilty; for a troubled sea can send forth nothing but "mire and dirt." False teachers are in the New Testament compared to "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame."

I will give you another instance from the same author. In one of his pamphlets he presents us with a passage from Dr. Manton on Hebrews xi. 'Christians need not to puzzle themselves about conceiving of

three in one, and one in three; let them in this manner come unto God, and it suffices; make God the object, and Christ the means of access, and look for help from the Spirit.' This quotation he has placed on the title page of his book, that he might be sure of catching the great numbers that will look no further. Those words in the valuable works from which he has taken them, come in as an answer to the scruples of good men. They know not how to conceive of three persons, and cannot order their speech by reason of darkness. This difficulty becomes a temptation: now the Doctor tells them, that they need not puzzle themselves about that *manner* of the union and distinction in the Divine nature which was never fully revealed. Any one may see he was then speaking to the distress of a wounded conscience, and not to the caprice of a wanton Arian.

Now, if this passage does the author any service who has impaled it in his own little book, it must signify, either that Dr. Manton did not believe the doctrine to be true, or that he did not take it to be of any importance. But the author knew both these insinuations to be false. For in his sermons on the same text, ("He that comes unto God must believe that he is,") that honest uncorrupted writer is express enough of his own opinion, p. 211. 'He that comes unto God must believe that he is, that is, so as he has revealed himself, one in three persons; for otherwise we worship an idol, and that which is not God. We form an idol when we think of God out of the Trinity.' And, p. 214, he bids us 'prize orthodoxy, and above all see ye be right in the point of belief; there are a sort of libertines risen up, that think our debates with Socinians and Arians are but vain and frivolous, and that a loose belief of God and Christ is enough. But if this general faith be enough, why has God revealed so many things that we might have been ignorant of?'

And when he gives rules about fellowship, he is so positive as to say, 'we cannot be saved except we hold one God in three persons, and Jesus as Media-

tor. These are supreme truths that are clearly revealed and propounded to our faith.' And, p. 272, 'To frame fit notions concerning the Trinity, that there are three persons in one Godhead, this is a mystery to be believed, not disputed and committed to the anxious travesty of our own reasons.' Upon this case I will observe a few things.

1st, It is of no great weight to any opinion who they are that received it. That is not our rule, we go upon a higher authority than what is human. The learning, the piety, the numbers of those who have espoused any doctrine, are but lower reasons for us to embrace it. But,

2dly, It is unfair to give out men as advocates for a notion, when we ourselves know they were enemies to it. It is a reproach upon their names, and God will arise to make inquisition for scandal as well as for blood. It is using them like the two witnesses, whose dead bodies will be exposed by a barbarous world. That is a great inhumanity; but methinks it is a viler insult upon their memories to make them say what they never thought of. Certainly these writers do not remember that "the saints shall judge the world," who take a liberty to abuse them by whole generations, as if it was not enough to bring a lying accusation against the living, unless they did it also against the dead. But as these great men died in the Lord, and rest from their labours, so their works shall follow them, not to reproach, but to "praise them in the gates."

3dly, That pretence, that the truth is *extorted* from these people; that though they have written for the commonly received faith, yet they are forced to own, that the evidence lies against them; proves a notorious want of modesty in him that brings it. The supposition is, that Dr. Owen and Dr. Manton, who were persons of the first rank, the one as a scholar, and the other as a preacher, could not write for a doctrine without dropping something against it. Now that turns upon one of these two things:

Either they knew that the opinion they maintained

was false, or they did not; if they *did*, it was a breach of their integrity; if they *did not*, it is a public evidence of their folly, that a writer in the next generation shall understand them better than they did themselves. Neither of these things shall I easily allow, upon the names of those eminent servants of Christ; and, therefore, there is a third inference, which I will leave any one to make who hears the case.

4thly, It is using mankind very ill to put such things upon us. It may be all one to me, what such a doctor says about the Divinity of Christ. His opinion is neither the argument nor the hinderance of my faith; but however let me not be imposed on in matter of fact. Let us not have deceitful reports; "no lie is of the truth." If the doctrine I am contending for be right, it will be so without fathers or doctors; but why should I make a false muster, both to wrong the dead and abuse the living? Let such froward hearts depart from you, do not know those wicked persons; whoso privily slanders his neighbour, cut off from your acquaintance.

And since I am upon this head, a certain author has obliged me by his demand, both to do him and myself justice in a quotation I gave you out of his book. I was indeed offended at the phrase of a derived and a dependent God, and having laid before you some loose expressions upon that head from others, I was troubled to find him among these unguarded writers. The passage I mentioned was this: after he had directed us to pray to Christ, he adds, "It is true he is the begotten of the Father, and sent of the Father, and the Father is greater than he, and the head of Christ is God; the Son of God derives from the Father, and is not properly self-existing." Thus far I went, and did not imagine there was any occasion of going further. But as he is pleased to think we are unfaithful in stopping there, I will give you the rest of the sentence. His next words are these: "But then if it be allowed a necessary derivation, though infinitely free as the rays of the light from the sun, and not merely arbitrary and at plea-

sure, which might never have been, it is sufficient to justify the great things said of him, and secure all that we intend, namely, that he is *above the level of the most exalted creature.*" This I am afraid is far from mending the matter. For,

First, He comprehends both the parts of the question, that used to be always opposite; whether the generation of the Son is voluntary or of necessity? He supposes both, which, as the terms are used in that dispute, I think makes a contradiction; because what is necessary in that sense, cannot be free. By necessary, we mean that which must have been; by free, that which might not have been.

Secondly, It is a very rash way of talking, to suppose any necessity upon the Divine will; because it makes it cease to be an act of the will, it leaves God himself at no liberty; here is one said to be derived from another, and yet was necessary to him. This is bold ungodly language.

Thirdly, If raising him "above the level of the most exalted creature" is all *he* intends, I can assure him it is not all that *we* intend. It is a true account, but a very low one, of the Great God, that he is above any creature; and, though it used to be always said, that he who is not a creature is God, yet as some have run into a wild imagination, and as wild a conduct, that will neither say the Son is a God nor a creature, ministers that would not keep people in the dark, are obliged to speak out. For, according to that position, which may be called the *nostrum* of our polite age, a being may be above the level of the most exalted creature, and yet not be the Supreme God! I see contradictions will pass, though mysteries cannot.

5thly, Though I never did, and never dare recommend any holy men to you as having dominion over your faith, yet do not suffer them to be treated injuriously, both as fools and knaves; they have deserved better of their generation, whom they served according to the will of God; and when you compare what is said of them with what they say of themselves, their enemies will be found liars.

The design of Satan in running down the faith of such great men, is to give the world a distaste of their holiness. Throwing off their opinions is an introduction to the dropping of their practice. The Lord's day goes away with the catechism. Men that are called enthusiasts in their doctrine, are no better in their devotion: and if thinking as they did not, is called coming back to the Bible, acting as they did not, may pass for a politer sort of religion. But—may my soul be found with those whom these men despise, for I doubt not they are among the living in Jerusalem!

5. Their desiring that the doctrines of Christianity may be delivered in no other words but those of Scripture, is what I call a stale artifice, and has been exploded as a mere fraud in all ages. It is a pretence as old as the Arians, and it is a pity that they who revived it have not thought it worth their while to clear themselves of having the same design with those that used it only as a shuffle. For,

1st, It was never their own practice. They continually run into metaphysical phrases, or cabalistical notions, that is, either the vain janglings of the heathen, or the filthy dreams of the Jews. A learned historian tells us, when they swelled in councils and swarmed in nations, they had no less than four or five creeds in the space of a few years. They were unstable in all their ways, "ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth." "Clouds without water" must be "carried about with wind."

And are these in our day any better? Will any of them allow me to be of the same opinion with the author of the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity, or less mistaken, because I am willing to subscribe all the Scriptures that he brings, and leave his propositions to himself? No, I know this will never do; and therefore they expect, either that I do not call Christ God, or that I talk of an originated deity that it is not self-existent. My orthodoxy with them is not determined by adhering to the phrases of the Bible, but controlling them with a set of impious distinctions.

One of them, who declared against the equality of the Son to the Father, was willing in a public assembly to confess that he is "over all, God blessed for evermore." What a trifling is this with sacred words! How evident is it, that to the unbelieving there is nothing pure! The "unstable," as well as the "unlearned, wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction." Every one knows that the text I have now mentioned is usually pleaded for our Lord's supreme Divinity; and is it not defrauding and going beyond my neighbour, when I give him those words as an expression of my own opinion, which I am sure he takes in a different sense from what I do? What is that but sporting myself with his deceivings? But "the Lord is the avenger of all such." The righteous Lord loves righteousness. Ministers of the gospel are "not to walk in craftiness, nor handle the word of the Lord deceitfully, but by a manifestation (not a concealment) of the truth, recommend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

2dly, This is no more than papists may do in the great fundamental of their idolatry. I mean *transubstantiation*. Against this, all the Protestant churches at the time of the Reformation declared with one voice. Now, according to the pretence of this new scheme, there is not any assembly but what may have a Jesuit for their pastor. If I desire him to satisfy me about his faith, he confidently tells me, that is an *inquisition*, and giving up the liberty that he has in Christ Jesus. If I insist upon it to know what his sentiments are about the great dividing point between us and those of Rome, he saith it is a *mystery*, and ought to be delivered in no other than Scripture language; and he will affirm neither more nor less than that Christ has said, "This is my body." If I ask him in what sense he takes that expression, whether proper or figurative, he runs out into declamations against words which man's wisdom teaches, and charges me with taking him away from his Bible, and setting up human decisions as standards in matters of faith.

I have carefully thought over that argument, and with all the turning I can give it, it appears to me as well calculated for a Jesuit as an Arian, and perhaps a little time may show, it is designed for them both. This trick produced rank popery in Poland, and it plainly gives the enemy the same advantage in England.

3dly, You know, and so do they too, though they do not own it, that the Scripture is the only plea we use for the doctrine we maintain, and I hope our sermons are not much inferior to theirs in Scripture language and Bible phrases. This pretence is what every enemy of the Christian church has made in all ages. It leaves the door open for the great invaders of our liberty, to come in upon us as a flood. They that have most advanced it in our day have made depredations upon the Bible; and therefore we look upon it as the work of spies, who come "to spy out our liberty that we have in Christ, that they might bring us into bondage."

6. We shall now consider the pretence wherein they glory, that their scheme is to promote a Christian charity and mutual forbearance. In this, like those of old, "they have seduced the people, saying, Peace, and there was no peace; one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar." We have heard speeches delivered with a great deal of flat formality, in praise of that which every man professes to admire, and every believer has the seeds of in himself. The Holy Spirit implants it in the hearts of his own people, and therefore it is a public evidence of our interest in Christ, by which all men will know that we are his disciples, when we have love one to another.

But "when shall vain words have an end?" Has the Scripture said so many things of brotherly love, only to express the rancour of those that want it? Is talking over a precept, to pass for obedience to it? Are those glorious things that we read of charity, to furnish the language of reproach, and help us to rail in the name of the Lord? How vile and foolish is it

on this occasion, to cool our zeal for the truth by crying up the happiness of union or the necessity of peace!

Who would imagine that when we plead for "the faith that was once delivered to the saints," any preachers of the gospel should tell us, that an agreement with them that deny it is of more importance than a contending for it, and support their opinion by these words of the Apostle, "Though I understand all mysteries, and have all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing;" and "Now abideth, faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Because these are some of the "feigned words" with which they make merchandise of you, and those "fair speeches" that deceive the hearts of the simple, I will lead you into the vanity of the argument by a few considerations. You will see that the Scriptures they bring in to advance charity above faith, are nothing at all to the purpose; that there is no other charity but what is founded upon an agreement in the faith, and all the exhortations to it in the Bible suppose that we equally hold the head; that we are sufficiently directed with what tenderness to use those who wander from the truth, without giving up one article of religion; and that there are not, perhaps, in the world, more notorious breaches of charity than among the very party that make such a noise about it. From them that consent not to wholesome words, and the doctrine which is according to godliness, we have examples of the men who are "proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness." From them have come these "foolish and unlearned questions that do gender strifes," 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5; 2 Tim. ii. 23.

1. The Scripture with which they would reproach us, will leave them short of their design. Why should

we be told, with vain repetitions, that the Apostle has said, "Though I understand all mysteries, and have all faith, and have not charity, I am nothing?" Can any one get leave of his own reason to imagine, that he designs to make an opposition between the mysteries of the Gospel and the precepts of the law, between the faith, "without which it is impossible to please God," and the charity that governs our carriage to his people? No, no; he is not here speaking of the great "mystery of godliness," or with any lessening to that which was the continual subject of his own ministry. To talk of understanding these mysteries is a contradiction; they belong to those "deep things" that will never be fully comprehended. But the *mysteries* that are inferior to charity are of a different nature, because it is here supposed that a hypocrite may have them;—such a knowledge and skill as God gave to Daniel and his companions, in learning and wisdom, understanding visions and dreams. And so, when he supposes a man to have "all faith" and not have charity, it cannot without violence to the words be expounded of saving faith; but as he himself declares it, a faith to "remove mountains," that is a power of working miracles. This, people may have; as our Lord assures us, many shall say in the last day, "Have we not in thy name, done many wonderful works?" and yet he professes, "I never knew you."

But it would be impious to suppose, that a person may have the faith of God's elect, and yet want charity. For if faith is right, it will work "by love." He that believes with the heart and confesses with the mouth that Jesus died and that he is raised from the dead, is born of God; and they that have "purified their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit," have done it "to an unfeigned love of the brethren." "He that hateth his brother, walketh in darkness," he is no believer; the truth has never shone into his soul. Charity indeed is greater than a notional faith, or what we call the faith of miracles; but to say it is greater than a belief of the truth, is only preferring the branches to the root. Our love to him that begat, is the prin-

ciple and guide of our love to those who are begotten of him, and there is no other love to Him but what arises from our believing in him; and there is no other believing in him but what takes into it the consent and acquiescence of the soul in the report that is given of him.

2. There can be no charity but what is founded upon an agreement in the faith. I own that the name of *charity* is not always used under the same extent in Scripture. Sometimes it signifies the benevolence that we have to all the world; and this seems to be the meaning of the word, when it is distinguished from "brotherly kindness." I do not take it in that sense here, for it is certain, an agreement in the faith is no condition of that temper. We must do good to all men, whether they are believers or not. We consider them, not as having obtained like precious faith, but as partaking of the same common nature. Religion will teach a person to look upon himself as a brother to the whole world, and sets before his eyes the example of our heavenly Father, who causes his rain to fall, and his sun to shine upon the good and the evil, the just and the unjust; and it is so far from making a union to Christ the foundation of our good will to men, that we are to "bless those that curse us," though in that they are guilty of cursing *him;* "to love them that hate us, and pray for such as despitefully use us and persecute us." This is certainly one sense of the word charity, and it holds out our duty to mankind in general; we must give no offence to the Jew or the Gentile, or the Church of God, but be harmless and blameless, as the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom we are as lights in the world, 1 Cor. x. 32; Phil. ii. 15. I hope none will thus understand the head I am now upon.

But, secondly, when we speak of charity in a narrower way, as that which is the glory of our religion, it is not distinguished from brotherly kindness, but only another name for it. It signifies a due temper of mind to the people of God: making

the saints in the earth to be the excellent in whom is all our delight; that we are companions of all them that fear God, and of them that keep his precepts. We love one another as Christ has loved us and them. As touching this brotherly love, believers have no need that any write to them, for themselves are taught of God to love one another, and indeed they do it towards all the brethren, Psal.xvi. 3; cxix. 63; John xiii. 34; 1 Thess. iv. 9, 10.

Now this, I say, supposes our agreement in the faith, and without that, it is not the duty that God has commanded, nor an effect of that grace that his Spirit has quickened. But then by this agreement I do not mean our having the same thoughts about every doctrine of religion; no, that is not only impossible, but the variety that is among us gives a beauty to the Christian life. There are many expressions of charity which suppose our opinions are not taken from one mould, such as "forbearing one another," overlooking a little difference, speaking of it as God himself does, that circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but a keeping the commandments of God.

But then what the apostle calls "holding the head" is the ground of all our regard to the brethren. Without "the unity of the Spirit" there is no "bond of peace." The persons whom we thus love are with us under "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one body, one Spirit, one hope of our calling," Eph. iv. 3—5. "We are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth to a holy temple in the Lord," Eph. ii. 20, 21. In order to the course of this love, there must be a mutual profession. Our "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ" is joined with a "love to all the saints," Col. i. 4. He that will not tell me what he believes, has no other demand upon my charity than "a heathen man or a publican." I am to do him good as I have opportunity, whether he is a Christian or not; but it is supposed I must know him to be a disciple

before I can love him as one. When the apostle says, "above all things have fervent charity among yourselves," 1 Pet. iv. 8, does he mean no more than what I am obliged to have for all mankind? And is there any difference between a brother and a stranger but what arises from an external profession? Have I any other rule for a mutual love besides what appears? Can I judge a person to be in the faith unless I hear it? or can I suppose him to be in a state of holiness, unless I see it? To say that I have no concern whether any one believes right or wrong about the great doctrines of Christianity, is to say I must have no charity for them. Thrusting them out of my care is excluding them from my delight; it makes me incapable of walking with them, rejoicing over them, provoking them to love, and good works, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. When the apostle John tells the elect lady and her children, that he loved them in the truth, and not only he, but all they that had known the truth, for the truth's sake which dwells in us, and shall be with us for ever, 2 John i. 2, was there no difference between his regard to such as these, and those that did not abide in the doctrine of Christ? and must he be charged with a breach of charity, when he directs, that "if any come to us and bring not this doctrine, we are not to receive him into our houses, nor bid him God speed; for he that bids him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds?" Every one sees not only that he distinguished these two sorts, but the foundation of his doing so. The reason of his love to the former was their being "in the truth," it was "for the truth's sake;" and yet though Christians are to use hospitality one to another, they are ordered not to receive some into their houses, because they "bring not this doctrine."

Was Paul advising Timothy against the rules of charity when he bid him beware of Alexander, who had "greatly withstood his words?" Was it a schismatical practice for him to "turn away from those that resisted the truth, and were reprobate concerning

the faith?" or when a man "consented not to wholesome words," "from such a one to withdraw himself?"

Neither charity nor faith are to be what men of corrupt minds will make them. The Scripture in giving us rules about them has made the matter visible enough. There is no cloud upon that text but what the lust of our own hearts has brought thither, "I beseech you mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine that ye have learned, and avoid them," Rom. xvi. 17. They that plead for charity without faith, and especially against it, are only taking pains for a plant that our heavenly Father has not planted. The apostles were limited, and so must we be; "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth," 2 Cor. xiii. 8. How earnestly does he desire that we may "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel?" Phil. i. 27.

(3.) We are sufficiently directed how tenderly to use those that wander from the truth, without giving up the honour of one doctrine or article to them. The servant of God must in "meekness instruct those that oppose themselves;" and what is it for? "That God may give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth," 2 Tim. ii. 25. Must not people be under the power of a perverse mind that will use this Scripture against our zeal for the faith? It is true, the servants of God are not to strive by furious methods, by corporal punishments, or any gross severities, but be gentle to all men; what they do should be in meekness. But then,

First, He must instruct them; this rule does not oblige him to hold his peace. There is nothing at all in it opposite to his insisting upon sound doctrine; nay, his doing it at a time that they will not endure it. It is no breach of this meekness, if he reprove them sharply, that they might be sound in the faith. He must not be silent, and neglect to instruct them, and call either his laziness or his cowardice by the name of meekness.

Secondly, This is necessary in order to a Divine blessing; he does it in hopes that God will give them repentance. But he that is silent when the doctrine of Christianity is opposed, has no hopes that God will give them repentance; he does not use the means in order to do it. God may give it immediately as he did to Saul; but we cannot expect a person should be reclaimed who is not so much as admonished. "Brethren," says the apostle, "if any of you err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins," James v. 19, 20. This is an honorary name put upon our endeavours. We are not able to convert an unbeliever; but God has given our zeal such a reputation, to show the value he has for any pains we take in order to it.

Thirdly, This repentance that we pray and hope for in these that now oppose themselves is, that they acknowledge the truth; not only believe it, but acknowledge it. We must look upon them as impenitent till there is a public confession. And,

Fourthly, until they do this, they remain "in the snare of the devil," and are led captive by him at his pleasure. And is it any charity to leave them there? Is not our silence to them upon this head an argument that we had rather have them pleased than saved, and are watching for their favour, and not for their souls? A true compassion would teach us "with fear to pull them out of the fire." It is certain the rules of Christianity do not clash with one another. The way of the Lord is perfect, and therefore no command in the Bible was ever designed to raze out that, "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge." No charitable thoughts can excuse our neglect of "trying the spirits whether they be of God," 1 John iv. 1. We are told of some whose "words will eat as doth a canker," and though we must be courteous to all men, yet that cannot take off the plain declaration of the apostle, "If a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour meet for the Master's use."

(4.) As when men talk of truth, so when they talk of charity, bring them "to the law and to the testimony;" it is not making a noise with a word that will do. The charity that the apostle recommends has plain and glorious characters belonging to it; and whenever they are wanting, the pretensions of men are vain. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; it envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." If you see a man deal in proud wrath, he may call himself as he pleases, but "proud and haughty scorner" is the name that God has given him. "Charity doth not behave itself unseemly;" scurrilous language is no more charity than it is decency: charity "seeketh not its own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil," much less does it take pains to form evil. Straining to torture words, setting them out to the worst light we can, has as little of charity as it has of honesty. But then, it is the glory of charity that, as it "rejoiceth not in iniquity," so it "rejoiceth in *the truth*." It is far from hating and opposing the truth.

God never made any grace to be a rebel against any doctrine; he never made a saint to pull revelation in pieces. Practical religion is far from being an enemy to the Bible; and therefore that is an ungodly charity that works up an intrenchment to those that deny the faith, and a battery against them that own it. But as the day is coming that wisdom shall be justified of all her children, so shall charity too; for we would so speak, and so do, as they that would be judged by the law of liberty, James ii. 12.

7. The most powerful of all their arts is the contempt with which they speak of mysteries, and the worship of God. Good people receive the love of the truth that they may be saved. God is pleased to manifest the good savour of his knowledge by us, and "we are a sweet savour of Christ, in those that perish, as well as in those that are saved: to the one we are a savour of death unto death, to the other of life unto life." A wicked man hates the light, and comes not to it, lest his deeds should be reproved. And as these like not to retain God in their know-

ledge, he gives them over to a reprobate mind. What opposes holiness ("the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,") opposes truth. "The love of money is the root of all evil, which whilst some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith." Observe those gradual marks of apostasy.

First, People begin with an indifference to the truth: they lose a sense of sin, and the powers of a world to come. It is all one to them whether there is any satisfaction to Divine justice or not. They grow careless about their souls; and a Saviour who is no God, will do as well for them, as he that is one. Then,

Secondly, This gives them a contempt of God's people; they despise their gifts, they hate their graces; praying, hearing, and every other action of worship is impertinent to them. The more spiritual a Christian appears to be, either in devotion or out of it, the more ridiculous they account him.

Thirdly, This will go on to an indolence about church-communion, and at last to a total neglect of it. "Remember the words that were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." People will make it more their concern to shelter those who break the peace of churches, than to fill up their places in maintaining it. They will rather be keepers of others' vineyards than attend their own.

Fourthly, This will lead to a profanation of the Lord's day; the time that they once thought sacred they will devote to journeys, or pollute with recreations; saying to God, "Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways."

Fifthly, As these practices are a plain contempt of God, so he often times returns the contempt upon them. "Because they receive not the love of the truth, he sends them strong delusion that they should believe a lie." They that declaim against a certainty

in matters of faith, will soon come to certainty enough in matters of error. And thus does an awful judgment vindicate itself against those that have "not believed the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."—Now here consider,

(1.) Any opposition to the truth, which appears in a hatred of practical godliness, carries its own confutation along with it. God leaves their arguments to be answered by their lives; and though people do not attend to the case till it grows notorious, yet the rule that Christ has given us is sure of being observed at last. "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles." "A vile person will utter error against the Lord;" and it will be seen sooner or later, that they "who cause divisions and offences, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly."

(2.) How unhappy is the soul that is seduced by these means! The case is described in language plain and dreadful. "When they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them that live in error. Whilst they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning; for it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them," 2 Pet. ii. 18—21.

(3.) Let me warn you against any opinion or conversation, that would teach you to trifle with the Lord's day. Whenever any wicked wretches are brought to religion, the *conviction* usually begins here; and there are very few go to the gallows, but own, that the *corruption* began here. I know that

the admired name of Mr. Chillingworth is now played against the great article of our faith, the Divinity of the Son and Spirit, and the main evidence of our devotion, the religious observation of the Lord's day. If the letters pretended to be his are not genuine, then the memory of a writer, who has performed so well for the Protestant cause, is loaded with injustice and calumny; and if they are, we may say, there is a more sure word of precept that we have to trust to. As he that breaks one of the least of the commandments, and teaches men so, is not fit for the kingdom of God, you had need try whether the things be so or not.

It was in a careful regard to the Lord's day, that your ancestors passed through the world with so much pleasure in their own souls, and such a noble testimony to the conviction of others. The Book of Sports was the great abomination under which they groaned; and, rather than promote it, they fled into New England, choosing to lose their country, and keep their conscience. But the generous notions of liberty and free thinking that some advance, make such a book either needless or irresistible. If the Court should be ever so vile, here are people that will "love to have it so; and what will they do in the end thereof?"

(4.) It is a mean and low carriage, if people are pressed with an argument, to protect themselves against it with contempt, instead of an honest answer. Thus, when our Lord had shown that "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light," "the Pharisees, who were covetous, heard all these things, and derided him." The cause of God needs no such baseness, but eternally abhors it. It is low and vile for people, when they meet with those that cannot dispute, to bring in their heresies privily and unawares, and when they are called into the battle, to turn off with a sneer. They are serious in their opinions to an inferior, and are always in jest about them before an equal. Thus, as one man mocks another, do they mock the Great God.

When seducers have to do with the unskilful, they push their cause; but upon other occasions they can slur it, and show the world that they are in jest when we are in earnest. How different was the temper and carriage of the apostle, who thought it meet as long as he was in this tabernacle to stir them up, by putting them in remembrance! 2 Pet. i. 13.

(5.) The laugh will quickly be turned upon them; for "surely he scorns the scorners." The doctrine of Christ's Divinity, which is now to them a trifle, will be a solemnity, when they have no company to divert the thought, and no riot to drown it. You may have partners enough when you deny his perfection, but you must be alone when you come to feel it. "Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and done despite to the Spirit of grace? It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," Heb. x. 29. 31. These free thinkers are no friends for a death bed, but leave a poor soul to tug and toil with that which they have taught him to defy. Like a blown deer, when he is marked by the huntsman, he is neglected and driven out by the rest of the herd; he has sported with them, but they will not run with him.

(6.) Let us be faithful to a glorious cause, that gives us an abhorrence of these methods; act worthy of the truth, "without partiality, and without hypocrisy." "Follow righteousness, faith, charity, and peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." The day is at hand that will declare every man's work, of what sort it is, for it shall be revealed by fire. Those notions bid the fairest for being right that have yielded the most comfort upon a death bed. Inquire then how they have believed, who were more than conquerors in the last and great battle, and went off rejoicing in hope of the glory of God; "whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."

CHAPTER IV.

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD BEING RECEIVED INTO GLORY, IS A MYSTERY OF GODLINESS.

HAVING thus considered the last account that is given of our great God and Saviour, that he was "received into glory;" and answered "the perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds who are destitute of the truth;" I now pass on to consider this branch of our religion, as I have done all the rest, under the notion of a "*mystery*," and without controversy a "*great*" one. What we mean by a *mystery* is,

First, That it is a thing which has been kept secret, and to this character the whole doctrine of Christianity agrees. It was scarcely known at all to the gentiles, and with a mixture of confusion and darkness to the Jews. Hence it is called "a mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to the saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery," Col. i. 26, 27. Thus, the same apostle tells us, that God by his revelation made known to him the mystery; and he speaks of his "knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit," Eph. iii. 3—5. And the design of the Gospel is "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world has been hid in God." And again we read of "the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith," Rom. xvi. 25, 26.

Secondly, It must be of such a nature, as to extend itself beyond the comprehension of our reasons. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments,

and his ways past finding out!" So we read of "the love of Christ that passes knowledge," Rom. xi. 33; Eph. iii. 19.

Many people contend for this as the only notion of a mystery, that it is a secret, and therefore when it comes to be known, the title ought to be dropped. And indeed according to their way of reasoning, my text is guilty of an impropriety in language. It should by no means have been delivered in this form, that the mystery of godliness *is* great, but that it *was* so; and the apostle referred to no more than the veil that was thrown upon it; not the substance of what we know, but the circumstance of our not knowing it, makes it be called a mystery. And thus it may have its name, and be spoken of with all this wonder, not for the sake of what it contains, but merely because of those "times of ignorance" that prevailed so long upon the whole world.

But, in vain do men depart from "the words of truth and soberness." The Holy Ghost tells us what the doctrine of godliness *is*, not what it *was;* how justly it is admired by all those to whom God has revealed it; and does not call it a mystery from the stupidity of such as never heard the joyful sound. It is, says he, "a great mystery ὁμολογουμένως," we translate it "without controversy;" but it signifies the *joint profession* that the people of God have ever made. They agree to be united witnesses on this head. Whatever others may think of it, yet where Divine grace has made a conquest, it never fails to give this doctrine a testimony; every one that believes it will own it. There is not only "the faith of God's elect," but "an acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness," Tit. i. 1. So that we have the voices of Christians in all ages and places sounding it forth, with the same confession, "Great is the mystery of godliness."

Thirdly, By a mystery, as the word is applied to religious matters, we understand something that is *revealed*, and which we are sure the Great God has told us. It is not for us to give out a set of "cunningly

devised fables," and pass them off for mysteries; no, that is a profane imposture, striking equally at the omniscience of God, and the liberties of men. How incomprehensible soever any doctrine may be, yet that the Holy Spirit has declared it, is a matter that ought to be clear and open. It is no reason that you should believe any thing from us, because we have strong imaginations that it is true. There are "foolish prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing."

The more wonderful any doctrine is, the greater evidence should we have of its being revealed. And this is the way that God has taken with respect to the Christian religion. As there is something in the nature of it that exceeds all our imagination, we ought to be very sure that it comes from heaven. To this purpose did God train up the Jews in an unaccountable devotion, because it was to be the emblem and figure of an unaccountable gospel. It was "a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ," Col. ii. 17. They were to do things they knew not why, in regard to what should be brought about they knew not how. The ark, and the mercy-seat above it, was a token of the Divine presence among them. When David brought these to Mount Zion, he cries out, "Arise, O Lord, into thy rest, thou and the ark of thy strength."

And to what purpose did he appoint among them such a little symbol of a great and glorious privilege, but in view of this, that the *Word* should be "made flesh;" and take up his tabernacle among us? Why had they all their sacrifices, divers washings, and carnal ordinances, but with regard to an atonement that should be made for sin, and the great sanctification that we have from the Holy Spirit? The Jews knew by their religion that something mysterious was to come after it; and when Christ appeared, whose name was *Wonderful*, they could then see, that all the devotions they had been employed in were to fix the hope of their fathers upon Him. So that God had abundantly testified to the truth of our religion, both in the former and latter dispensations. The language

of them both was, that he would make known to the world things that could never have been invented, and which, now they are revealed, can never be explained. Such a mystery is this part of our religion, that Christ was "received into glory." There is a great deal in it that leads us beyond our depth; we are lost in the delicious wonder; but then at the same time it is matter of plain revelation.—I shall here,

1. Lay before you some few of the mysteries that we find in this branch of the Christian religion.

2. Answer the objection that is made against it on the account of its being a *mystery*.

1. There are many wonders that a serious mind can observe in Christ's being received to glory. It is strange that he who was so helpless and desolate, should quickly after be possessed of all the fulness of heaven. It is further wonderful, that he who seemed abandoned by God, the object of his wrath and justice, should be taken into so much favour; that he who was deserted by men and Angels, is now the head of influence and government to them both; and that a suffering nature, which was made to die, should be united to one which is eternal and unchangeable.

(1.) We may behold and wonder, that Christ who was so helpless and destitute should be possessed of all the fulness above. There is no similitude between his condition in the two worlds. "I was dead, but behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death," Rev. i. 18. Here below, "the Son of man had not where to lay his head," and now he is "made higher than the heavens," Luke ix. 58. Heb. vii. 26. He bore upon him all the marks of an unhappy nature; he was poor and miserable; but out of his fulness we are to be made rich; for "he ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things," Eph. iv. 10.

Could any one imagine, that the characters of the same person should be so extreme, "Ye killed the Prince of life!" Acts iii. 15; that one, under the notion and fate of a malefactor, should be a Prince; and not only so, but that his empire—the gift of his

power, the grant of his authority and love—should be *life!* "I give to them," says he, "eternal life, and they shall never perish," John x. 28. How strange is it to read of their "crucifying the Lord of glory!" that he, whom they hauled along with contempt and cruelty, should have the whole disposal of the future world! "In the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears; he learned obedience by the things that he suffered;" but now "being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him," Heb. v. 7—9.

How amazed was Pilate when he put the question, "Art thou a king then?" This he inquired upon our Lord's telling him, "My kingdom is not of this world; if it were, then would my servants fight; but now is my kingdom not from hence," John xviii. 37. It was strange language out of the mouth of a person deserted by his friends, and pursued by his enemies to the very gates of death; and yet it is all true, for he was a King. He whom man despised, and the nation abhorred, the servant of rulers, was assured that kings should see and arise, princes also should worship, Isa. xlix. 7.

They that met him when he rode to Jerusalem, cried, "Hosannah, blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord;" as it was foretold, "Fear not, daughter of Zion, behold thy King cometh sitting on an ass's colt," John xii. 13. 15. Though he hung upon the cross, and heard them say, "Himself he cannot save," yet he was then within a few moments of an empire and dominion that should set him "above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." As Daniel was told in his vision, that "one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days; and there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed," Daniel vii. 13, 14.

Indeed these extremes may well be accounted for, because he submitted to the infelicities of this life on purpose to "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" and when that was done, the necessity of humiliation being all over, "he for ever sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." But who could ever imagine that the same person, who calls himself a *worm*, should have before him a greatness that would show him to be a *God!*

His disciples themselves knew not how to conceive of this. They attended him with love and wonder quite through his ministry; they followed him in the regeneration; but when he came to die, they scarcely thought it consistent with the glory of his own person, or the redemption of Israel that was expected from him. Had they thought that going after him to the cross was putting themselves into the train of a King, they would not have forsaken him and fled. But though he was then departing out of the world to the Father, returning back to Him that sent him, throwing off mortality and all its incumbrances, yet that was more than they imagined. As Christ tells Peter, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards." They could neither look beyond the cross nor above it. That unhappy lot was the furthest bound of their meditations, and so they scattered every man to his own, and left him alone. God had then hid from them what would be their joy and conviction another day; though he was crucified in weakness, he must be raised in power, 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

A little distance of time brought them to reconcile these things in their thoughts, which they imagined would never come together in nature. They speak of them in the same breath. The God of our fathers has glorified his Son Jesus, whom ye took and hanged on a tree. That same Jesus whom ye crucified, has God made both Lord and Christ. Ye denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go; and we are his witnesses, and so is the

Holy Ghost, whom God has given to all that obey him, Acts v. 30, 31; ii. 36; iii. 13.

Is not here a mystery, that though in him our nature was at the lowest, though he was the greatest instance of abasement that ever lived in the world, yet in him the same nature should have all its perfections! that though his body was the most abused, and his soul under the heaviest pressure of grief and wrath, yet each of these should be "full of joy with the light of God's countenance!" that a soul plunged into hell should not be left there, and a body under the empire of corruption should see no corruption! that under this hell, and in view of this corruption, God showed him the path of life! that in going to die, he was but going to live! that he entered into hell, into all the anguish that his soul could feel, not to stay there! that he made the grave his road to heaven! that the path of death was to him the path of life! and what he called an absence from God, was the means of a presence with him! These are mysteries that swarm and crowd in upon us; they are too wonderful, and so high, that we cannot attain unto them. "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory," Psal. lxxii. 18, 19.

(2.) It is more mysterious, if we consider this glory as an act of God's favour to a person who was lately under his wrath. The enemies of our Lord's divinity do not love to have us talk of these matters; and the reason is plain, because as bearing the indignation of the Lord is more than a mere creature could do, and therefore supposes him to be God's fellow: so the troubles he underwent not being on his own account, it leads us to consider the imputation of his righteousness to us, and of our sins to him. And therefore one author, who pretends to answer Mr. Tross's catechism, is very peremptory, that the Father was never angry with the Son; for which he gives this reason, he was always well pleased with him. It is pity that a man,

who cannot himself distinguish in so plain a case, should presume that no other person is got above that stupidity. The Father was always well pleased with him as a Son and a righteous servant; but does not the Scripture very often represent him as the object of a Divine justice? Can any words be fuller to this purpose, than that "God laid on him the iniquity of us all;" that "he made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;" that "it pleased the Father to bruise him, and put him to grief, and to make his soul an offering for sin;" that "he spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all;" that "him he has set forth to be a propitiation for our sins through faith in his blood?" Isa. liii. 6, 10; 2 Cor. v. 21; Rom. viii. 32; iii. 25.

When he prayed to be delivered from the cup that was put into his hand, and acquiesced at last in the Divine disposal, those words, "Not my will, but thine be done," show what the will of the Lord was, that "by this will we should be sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Hence we read that to redeem us "from the curse of the law, he was made a curse for us; as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." In the place from whence we have this passage, it is said, "He that is hanged is accursed of God," Deut. xxi. 23.

Thus has the Holy Ghost represented him to us as bearing the wrath of the Almighty, and suffering our whole punishment. No wonder that his enemies looked upon him as one "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." David as his prophet and his type speaks of this case, that the wicked would say, "Let us persecute and take him, for God has forsaken him; he trusted in God that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him;" or as our Evangelist tells the story, "for he said, I am the Son of God," Psal. xxii. 8; Mat. xxvii. 43. But God was so far from owning him, that himself complains, as the Psalmist had done several ages before: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and as it is

there added, "Why art thou so far from the words of my roaring?" And yet this person, so forlorn, and accursed, was the favourite of heaven! What he endured was a punishment with respect to us, and a merit in himself; and therefore what he received was properly a reward. His miseries may be considered two ways; as to what is past, they are for the doing away of sin, the finishing transgression, the putting an end to iniquity; as to what is future, they are a recommendation of him to the Divine favour.

Here is the wonder; he cries to the Father for help, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The Father denies him this petition, and yet it is without any resentment on either side. "As the Father knows me, so I know the Father; I lay down my life for the sheep." He has no uneasiness at the resolution that was passed for his dying; nor has the Father any contempt of him on account of the death he submitted to. Though he would not excuse him from drinking the cup that was put into his hand, yet he will give him "a name above every name." He is not only received into a place of reward, but with the greatest love from the Father whom it once pleased to bruise him and put him to grief.

He that took delight in the sufferings of Christ, to whom his blood was "a sweet smelling savour," rejoices in him as a righteous servant, and as the Son of his love, in whom he will be glorified. "Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." Here then is the mind that hath wisdom; mystery and pleasure flow into us. No joy in Christ upon a throne, hindered him from being a sacrifice upon the cross; no punishment upon the cross, could hinder him from being welcome back again to the throne. "Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God has highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name," Phil. ii. 8, 9.

(3.) You see, that he who was deserted by men and angels, is now the head of influence and govern-

ment to them both. He had little attendance in the former part of his life; angels came and ministered to him in the wilderness, and the disciples continued with him in his temptations. He could have called in more than twelve legions of angels to have prevented his death. He had one of them to strengthen him under his agony in the garden; but we do not read that there were any of them in his last battle with the prince of this world. The disciples fled for fear, the angels were held back by order, that he might tread the wine-press alone. They had no indifference to him, and no dread of the confederacy that was formed against him, but at that time he must be unassisted. Now, this desolate person was afterwards to have his crowds; though he was hung between heaven and earth, as one that had no interest in either, yet he soon declared himself to be the sovereign and the delight of both. When he died, nature itself groaned under a thick darkness. The sun was darkened, the rocks rent, the graves opened, the earth shook, the veil of the temple was torn at the fall of him who was greater than the temple.

But when this was over, he both gave and received a joy, both above and below; he carried a "glory to God in the highest." We may suppose the angels looking down, and hanging their heads over the cross whilst he suffered there. They might rejoice indeed in the great design of procuring peace on earth, and showing so much good will towards men; but as far as we can judge of their nature by the softness of our own, when he bowed down his head and said, "It is finished," they gave a shrink at the last breath of one whom they loved so well, and attended so long. And if we may imagine any such concern upon them, it was soon over; they were ready to receive a soul that was lately sorrowful to death in the garden, and driven out by the pains of death upon the cross.

They would also guard his body in the sepulchre. They that had "disputed with the devil about the body of Moses," would never suffer any insult upon that of Jesus. And may we not say, "Who is this

that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, glorious in his apparel? Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel? Because I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me." But behold him in his return, "The Lord goes up with a shout, our God with the sound of a trumpet." Psal. xlvii. 5.

He went to heaven to "fill all things." Angels are the better for him. He reconciles them in heaven, not by bringing them from a state of enmity, but he confirms them in a state of friendship, and therefore calls himself "the Lord God of the holy angels." He maintains the great pomp of that world. Heaven itself is only what he makes it. Filling all things supposes in him such a perfection, that nothing greater can be said of any being, and it expresses "the fulness of him who fills all in all." Nay, from thence he fills his church upon earth with light and grace. He receives gifts for men; he conveys these gifts to them; and whilst he thus makes them grow, they increase with the increase of God.

(4.) It is another mystery, that a suffering nature is united with that which is eternal and unchangeable. The Scripture often speaks, under the characters of one nature, of those actions that must be attributed to another. Thus, when we read of *God* purchasing a church *with his own blood*, the meaning is this, that He who is God took upon him a bleeding nature, by which he was capable of making this purchase.

Now here is a wonder, that in our blessed Saviour we see a part that was liable to shame, torment, and death, and yet at the same time we are to conceive of him as one eternally above all those things: not only God, but unchangeably so, blessed, and that for ever, without any interruption to his felicity. His days on the earth were a shadow, and yet he is without beginning of days and end of years. He was tossed to and fro as a locust, his strength became as a potsherd, and yet he is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." He never wanted a glory, and yet he is received into it. The Divine nature is without any variableness or

shadow of turning. To talk of giving that a happiness, or of taking any away from it, is blasphemy; and yet he had a "joy set before him," which he was not then arrived to, and after he had "endured the cross, and despised the shame," he sat down "at the right hand of God."

These are no contradictions; you will understand them of different natures. But it is very mysterious that God should be with us; that he whose dwelling is not with flesh, should take part of the same that we have; and that he who has said, "To whom will you compare me and make me equal," should in all things be made "like unto his brethren;" that he who as a Creator is "our Father," as a Redeemer should be "the First-born among many brethren." Well may his name be called *Wonderful*, when "a Child born" is "the Mighty God," and "a Son given," "the Everlasting Father!"

2. I promised to consider what men, in the vanity of their minds, have urged against this doctrine merely because it is a mystery; so that what the people of God in all ages have confessed with pleasure, they would have us ashamed of. There are two absurdities that are often used by way of insult:

First, A flat denial that there are any mysteries in religion. This, indeed, makes clear work with all revelation at once, and is in effect a limiting of the Holy One of Israel, a prescribing to God what he shall tell us, and making our wisdom a standard to his. It is calling his counsels to our bar, and pronouncing sentence upon what he says, whether it is true or false, though we mean no more by it than intelligible or unintelligible.

Secondly, There is another craft by which some people think to carry their cause, and that is putting us upon an explanation of what we have called a *mystery;* which is only a trick to make us destroy what we are building up. Thus does a certain author pretend to put off every argument that is brought for the Trinity, by teasing questions; 'Why will they not tell us,' says he, 'whether by three persons they mean

three infinite minds or not?' which is an expression of undetermined signification. If he that puts the question will tell us whether he means by three minds, three Gods, he knows, and so do all mankind, it would be answered in the negative; and yet he can allow himself to rush through all evidence, and go on, without either truth or shame, to assert that we are setting up the tritheistical doctrine; that is, that we maintain three Gods. I shall be never the more persuaded that these people give us the true meaning of God's words, who are resolved at all hazards to pervert what they know to be the sense of *ours*. But,

(1.) The denying that there are things unintelligible in Christianity, and the reducing our faith to what we can explain, is giving countenance to a humour in religion that we should be ashamed of every where else. What would a mathematician or any artist think of me, when he has surprised me with a certain fact, if I should say it is impossible, because to me it is inconceivable! That the thing is done I see, but how it is brought about I do not know; and so it is here. I may be sure that God has told me such things, though I cannot by searching find them out.

(2.) That other way of putting us upon explanations of a doctrine which we say is a *mystery*, is an argument that these men know nothing, but love to dote about "questions and strifes of words." How ridiculous would this be in any other case! As, for example, suppose the question is, whether Lazarus was raised from the dead or not? We affirm it, only upon the report of a history which we know to be true; that it is there laid down in words easy to be understood. Now, there can be no answer to this, but to show us, either that we have mistaken the narrative, or ought not to trust it. But how vain would it be for any one, instead of replying this way, to flirt upon us with such questions as these authors use concerning the Trinity, and argue in this manner: Will they not tell us what became of Lazarus's soul? Was it in heaven? If so, it must be a loser in coming back again. Or was it in hell? That opinion is as

bad. Or was it in a separate state? That leads us into an antichristian folly. Or was it not parted from his body? Then he could not be dead. Now, what is all this to the purpose, when the question is not *how* it came about, but whether the thing is true in fact? Cannot I believe that Lazarus died and rose again, without pretending to account for what was never written? And just so it is in the other case.

I have now only one thing more for your service from this great subject, and that is,

IV. To consider the Deity of Christ, who was thus "manifest in the flesh, and received up into glory," as it is a doctrine of *godliness*, and designed to promote a religion that is pure and undefiled before God and our Father. We must obey from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered us. We are the servants of righteousness. We are chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, and we purify our souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, Rom. vi. 17, 18; 2 Thes. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 22.

I have shown you, under the several heads of Christianity that are collected in this text, that the truth contained in it is of a practical nature. By the belief of these things men have lived in duty, and died in peace. I shall therefore, in these arguments, give my thoughts a new turn, and show you how it is a mys tery of godliness, under the distribution that the apostle gives us. The three graces he mentions are all employed, enlarged, confirmed, and refreshed, by our receiving this testimony, that *he* who is spoken of in these words is truly God. These are, as we read in that well known place, "faith, hope, and charity." They are not opposed to one another, as some vain men for their own ends do presume to insinuate. There is no charity but what grows out of faith, and there is no faith but what grows out of charity. We read of faith in the Lord Jesus, and love to all the saints, and that your faith grows exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth, Col. i. 4; 2 Thes. i. 3. There is no more

contradiction between these two, than between the root and the branches. God has joined them together, and it must be a sad confounding work for men to put them asunder.

I take these three in their more extended notion to include the whole work of the Spirit upon our souls, and the exercise of them to comprehend our whole duty to God in the world. Whatever he does in us may be reduced to some of these heads, and whatever we do for him is only bringing forth into life what he has given us in principle.

Now you will find, that there either can be no existence of faith, hope, and charity, or no use of them, and no benefit by them, but what has either regard to, or a deduction from the Deity of Him who was manifest in the flesh. Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and he that loves him that begat, loves him also that is begotten of him; and whatever is born of God overcomes the world: who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God? 1 John. v. 1. 4, 5. If he is not God, it is in vain that our faith regards his person, that our hope depends upon his promise, and our charity rejoices in his people. Every one of these graces not only supposes that we have a revelation concerning Christ, but that this revelation tells us of his Divinity, as you will see by distributing your thoughts under the particular heads that I have now mentioned.

1. I begin, as the apostle himself does, with your FAITH. This he makes to be the first of the three. And though some in a little spurt of wit tell us, that they know no other trinity but faith, hope, and charity; yet if their faith was right, they would know another Trinity, that is, they would receive what God has proclaimed concerning himself in the Holy Scriptures. But in the way that many of them go on, they are in great danger in knowing another trinity, "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."

I shall here take *faith* in such a view, as to keep

it distinguished from hope for we often confound them in our descriptions. What is said of one does equally belong to another. But under the head of faith, I would desire you to take these three particulars; our assent to the revelation that God has given us, our profession of this to the world, and our duty and devotion to him in whom we believe. These things belong to faith, as it is different from the hope that is in us. Now you will find upon a just examination, that without regard to the Deity of Christ, we may be at a loss in every one of the particulars that I have mentioned. If we do not own him to be God, we neither assent to the revelation, nor can we make an honest confession of him to the world, nor is it possible we should be clear in the acts of worship and duty.

(1.) One thing contained in that faith that is the principle of every good man, and that leads him into all his practice is, that he can rest himself upon "the record that God has given of his Son." He reads and subscribes to "the witness of God," the testimony that we have in Scripture. And the work of faith upon this head is to silence all the mutterings of carnal reason, and bring down every high thought to captivity and obedience.

Our minds are as unsanctified as our wills. We may as well pretend to a natural holiness as a natural wisdom. The Spirit of God is to enlighten the eyes of our understanding, as well as make us feel the power of his grace in our hearts, and the sweetness of it in our affections. And till he has produced upon us a glorious change, as our corruptions rise against the commands of God, so does our ignorance against his doctrines. The one we reckon bondage, the other foolishness. "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14. It is a dreadful account that we have of "the carnal mind," that it is "enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," Rom. viii. 7. Now Divine grace teaches us our duty. It shows us that such a

work must be done, though it be against all the temper of human nature, and such a truth must be received, though it be against all its dictates. "We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given us of God."

Believing a mystery is a branch of self-denial, as well as complying with a precept. We have as much to say against taking up the cross that he has prescribed, as against any doctrine that he has revealed. The account he gave of himself was this: As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me; this is the bread that came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eats of this bread shall live for ever. Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard this, said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it? When Jesus knew that his disciples murmured at it, he said to them, does this offend you? But there are some of you that believe not; therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me except it were given him of my Father, John vi. 57—65.

It is no more unnatural for me to say, that one is three, and three are one, than to hate father and mother, and life itself, for the sake of the gospel. There is nothing more shocking in any mystery than there is in such a command. But faith rubs through the difficulty, by saying, This is the word of a God that cannot lie, and therefore it is true; this is the will of a God who gives no account of his matters, and therefore it must be done. Reason has as full an obligation in the one case as it has in the other. How can He who appeared in the flesh be God? How is it possible there should be but one supreme eternal being, and yet the same things be said with equal fulness of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

Certainly, say they, 'this can never be the meaning of the revelation; our religion must be reducible to common sense; God will never tell us contradictions; and what have we our reason for, but to judge

whether the proposition is true or not?' You will see that this argument is owing to a want of faith, or acquiescence in a doctrine purely upon a Divine testimony; that if we really did believe what God says, merely because he has said it, these objections would be all disarmed: and that you will soon perceive, if you do but turn the force of this reasoning upon the practice of self-denial.

Has not a martyr, or one who for the sake of Christ suffers the loss of all things, as much to say against the troubles of life, as we can oppose to the mysteries of faith? may he not plead just as the others do, 'Has the God of nature obliged me to save my life, and am I taught by Christianity to think that it may be my duty to lose it? what! is our religion a heap of contradictions? Has Christ ever spoken of that with reputation in his gospel, which is a breach of the sixth commandment in the law? Does grace root out the very first principle of nature, which is self-preservation?' That three cannot be one, is no more a maxim, than self-preservation is a principle with human nature; and I can as soon believe what God tells me contrary to the former, as I can do what he bids me when it is destructive of the latter.

Now, as faith says, I must do the duty that God calls me to, without asking *why;* so it equally says, I must believe every doctrine that he has revealed, without asking *how* these things can be. The reason of this absolute surrender of the understanding and the will, is plain; because, as I know God is infinitely good, he will do nothing wrong, and therefore his ways are gracious, though I may not see them; so God, who is infinitely wise, will say nothing false, though at present I cannot explain it. "What if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, and every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings. Every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." Rom. iii. 3, 4. 19.

Abraham in his obedience "went out not knowing whither he went," and in his faith "believed in hope against hope," Heb. xi. 8; Rom. iv. 18. This is faith, to believe every thing that God says, upon his own word, as well as to do every thing that he orders, for his own sake. Any other ground of our assent to a doctrine than a Divine testimony, is not faith, but something else; and therefore to argue I know not how, to reconcile the Divinity of the Son and Spirit to the unity of God, (supposing these things to be clearly laid down in Scripture,) is the rebellion of unbelief; it is the principle that exalts itself against the knowledge of God; it is the foam of a carnal mind.

(2.) Without thinking that *he* is God who was "manifest in the flesh," we cannot make a fair and undisguised profession to the world. The Scripture has laid a great deal of weight upon this. "If thou believe in thy heart, and confess with thy mouth thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believes unto righteousness," Rom. x. 9, 10. Our interest in the righteousness that God has provided, our application to it, and dependence on it, are all with the heart; but "with the mouth confession is made to salvation." Our salvation is concerned in what we say, as well as in what we think. It is not enough that your hearts are filled with an esteem of Christ, and employed in reliance upon him, but there must be a confession with the mouth.

God has called the tongue your glory; and he has given it on purpose that it may be engaged for his. It was foretold that this would be the effect of Gospel doctrine and Gospel grace, that one should say, I am the Lord's, and another should call himself by the name of Jacob, and a third should subscribe with his hand to the Lord God of Israel, Isa. xliv. 5, that is, they would take all the ways that could be to publish the name of the Lord, to make known his mighty acts among the sons of men, to speak of the glory of his kingdom, and triumph in all his praise. As carnal reason would persuade us not to glorify the Christian doctrine, so carnal interest has as much to say against

our confessing it. Our Lord knew all this, and therefore warns us against denying him before men. The Apostle, though he was very careful of Timothy's health, yet tells him he must not be ashamed either of the testimony of Christ, or of one that was his prisoner, but be a "partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God."

Now, he that believes that Jesus is God has not only the ground of a good confession, but the method of a clear and distinct one; he both knows why and what to say. The Scripture has filled his mouth with arguments, that the Child born is the everlasting Father, and the Son given, the mighty God; that He was made of "the seed of David" is "over all God blessed for ever." In this doctrine he makes a stand; it is above the reach of his thoughts indeed, but it is what God has told him. And he can never think the Scripture would have worded these things with so little caution, that by it we should be taught to speak of the Son as we do of the Father, as if they were of one nature, and yet conceive of them as if they were of two.

Thus a Christian is at a point. This, as our Lord tells Peter, is the rock upon which he would build his church; and the gates of hell have not yet prevailed against it. Those gates have opened all ways, and poured out their forces with a prodigious variety; sometimes denying the unity of God, and sometimes the trinity of persons; and yet the Church stands, and so does the truth, just where Christ has left it. We may call this, as he does, "a tried foundation, and a sure corner-stone," 1 Pet. ii. 6; it has been tried above seventeen hundred years. If the batteries of impiety could have brought it down, or the underminings of craft could have blown it up, we should have lost it long ago. But we are making that "good confession" now, which the apostles and prophets have witnessed before us. There is nothing new in the malice of the adversary; they only revive exploded arguments and rotten heresies, that have no more of antiquity than the stench of it; and there is nothing *new* in our cause; we contend for no more than "the faith once delivered

to the saints; it is as old as our religion, it was revealed when that began, and will be glorious when that is complete.

You will see the difficulty of making any profession, when people go off from the Deity of Christ; their ways are moveable, none can know them, as it is said of the adulteress, and may well be applied to those who "go a whoring from their God." Now they are without, now in the street, and now in every corner; and when they are baffled in an argument, can wipe their mouths and say, We have done no wickedness, Prov. vii. 12; xxx. 20.

Sometimes they deny that Christ had any being before his incarnation, and any existence before his human nature. This was the error of Samosatenus, which Socinus revived with a few alterations and amendments. That is now the abhorrence of our polite age; they own that he is above the angels, and that he was before them; and because they resolve not to call their opinion by the name of Arianism, they rather choose to have it nonsense; they will not say he is a creature, nor allow us to say that he is a God; he is not produced by creation, but emanation. He had a beginning, and yet there never was a time when he was not; that is, he both had a beginning and no beginning! So hard do men always find it to poise their own schemes, though they think it easy enough to see the faults of others.

To what do those witness a confession, who deny the Deity of Christ? what do they say of him? They answer, indeed, that he cannot be God, equal to the Father and the Spirit, without making three gods; and therefore he must be distinct from the Father in nature, or otherwise you cannot secure the unity of the Godhead. Well, what is he then? a God he cannot be in the supreme sense of the word, a creature he must not be. Does he derive from the Father? they tell us, yes. Was he ever underived? they tell us, no; because the Scripture sets no time for that derivation. If we ask them, Is he self-existent? they deny it. Is he necessarily existent? they will not

own it; for, as a learned person observes, 'Self-existence is a word with two faces, one to oblige friends, and the other to keep off enemies.'

We are obliged by Christianity to make some profession of our Lord, not to be ashamed of him and his words; and what can we say when we throw up his Deity? We are like a tree that is loose at the root, that can stand no longer than till it is tried. A Jew asks, if he was any more than a man; we say, yes. An atheist asks, if he is a God; we say, no. He replies, why is he called so? we tell him, he has only the name in a subordinate sense. He takes the same way to expound what is said of the Father, that we do upon those places that refer to the Son, and by our own handle of argument, he tells us flatly that the Scripture declares no supreme God at all.

No wonder that persons who go off from this doctrine are against any profession, when their scheme leaves them so unable to make one. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." They may give our practice, as long as they please, the hard names of inquisition, popery and bondage, but the infelicity arises from within. Asking for their faith is only rummaging into their confusion. Though they seem to be so very clear in the point, what Christ is not, yet they are all in the briers when you ask them what he is. So that their profession is a sort of negative Christianity: it goes no further than to tell us what he is not; and all this while, though it is evident what they witness against, yet no mortal can tell what it is they witness to.

Is it to his being a creature? no, they say that is blasphemy. Is it to his being neither God nor creature? all mankind will say that is nonsense. If they say they cannot tell what his existence is, that it is between a creation and a supremacy, that a being may be from another, and yet not made by him, this is a *mystery*. Thus they are driven to that as a refuge, which they object to us as a crime. They will not allow us to say that Christ is both God and man, that there is a union between the two natures, which we

cannot explain, but yet believe; and now they are forced to take the same way in maintenance of their own scheme. A trinity in unity is no more a contradiction than a subordinate God, or a derived eternal. I can as soon believe a union between the Divine and human natures, as I can believe a medium between a supreme and a created nature; and if I must not pretend to account for the latter, I may be excused in adoring the former.

(3.) I told you that there must and will be, where there is a true faith in Christ, a life of duty and devotion to him: I say, *to him*, not only *by him* as he is Mediator, but *to* him, as he is the object of these applications. We "call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," as well as on the Father through the Son and by the Spirit; and how shall we call on his name, and so be saved, if he is not God? "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?"

Believing in any one is the great homage of our souls to him; it is doing our all for him; it is trusting our souls with him; and can this faith and hope be in any less than a God? it is making him the centre and the end of all our duties. To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself: no; but if we live, we live unto the Lord, and if we die, we die unto the Lord; so that living or dying we are the Lord's, Rom. xiv. 7—9. He means neither less nor more in this profession, than what he says in another place; "To me to live is Christ," Phil. i. 21. They live to Him that died for them and rose again.

If a person is doing all this to a creature, or to one who by nature is no God, what has he left for Him who is the supreme and governing cause? Is there an infinite distance between the Father and Son in themselves, and is there to be none in our devotion? There is a curse upon him "who makes flesh his arm," and whose heart "departs from the Lord;" and does Christianity lead us into such a departure?

has the Gospel ensnared us? is that which is life in itself made death to us? God forbid.

Thus you see how loose we shall be in our devotions, how tremulous and wavering in all our practice, when once we let go our hold of *his* Deity who was "manifest in the flesh." We shall either not worship him at all, as some of these writers tell us we should not; or we must do it with confusion, if we listen to those that say we should. And what a sad way must a man be in, about a practice that conscience tells him is needful, and criticism tells him is dangerous! In worshipping the Son, he is afraid of provoking the Lord to jealousy; in not doing it, he may fear the vengeance of his wrath when it begins to burn.

And it is commanded that all men honour the Son *as* they honour the Father. Some tell him that the word *as* does not signify an equality; but that makes him no easier in his mind, and no more settled in his proceedings, unless they can tell him what it does signify. It certainly includes something, and people do him no good who do not positively determine how much there is in it. For if he must not honour the Son equally with the Father, he may be either a rebel by giving too little, or an idolater by giving too much. And can that be a doctrine of godliness, that does not only confound people in their thoughts, but unhinge them in their practice?

They that tell you that Christ is God and man, leave your way clear with respect to duty. Asm an you are not to worship him at all, but consider him as a creature, as a dependent, as an example, as a sacrifice; but as God you are to love him with all your heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, to call upon him, to believe in him, to live by him, to derive all the existence and growth of your religion from him. There is no difficulty in conceiving the nature and method of your practice. But the man that will not determine what Christ is, is never likely to determine what you must do.

2. You may observe the same of your *hope*, that it

regards the Divinity of Christ. This is another of those graces that the Holy Spirit works in us; and in doing that, he testifies of Him. 1st, We rest our souls upon his righteousness. 2dly, We are satisfied in the truth of his promises. 3dly, We look to him for an everlasting life. These things are sometimes called our *hope*, and sometimes our *faith;* faith supposes them to be invisible, and hope to be future.

(1.) We rest upon His righteousness; and that we could never do, if he were not the Supreme God. I have no more concern in the death of Jesus, than in that of Moses, if no more can be said of him than that he was "made of a woman and made under the law." But when he is said to bring in "an everlasting righteousness," that takes into it a great deal more than the extremity of his sufferings: it was "by himself that he purged away our sins," and therefore this is the name whereby he shall be called, "JEHOVAH our Righteousness." Jer. xxii. 6.

I own that some who deny his Divinity, say they trust in his death; but I should think those of the party talk with the greatest unity of sentiments, who strike at both; as it is well known the champions of their scheme have usually done. They tell us, and that in a manner which is profane enough, that God might have accepted of what he pleased as the payment of our debt. This is bold unhallowed language, to say no worse of it. I should never dare to say that God might have done the reverse of what it *became* him to do. The Θεοπρεπεια* that the apostle speaks of, ought to stop the mouths of gainsayers. We are not called to determine the necessity of his nature, especially since he has told us the resolution of his will; that "it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many

* It is difficult to convey the exact meaning of this word in English. What comes nearest to it, perhaps, is, "The Divine honour;" or, "The Divine beauty:" and it means here, "The infinite beauty and majesty of God, in acting for ever in a manner becoming himself, and in perfect consistence with his own eternal honour and excellence."

sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Heb. ii. 10. It was more decent for him to pardon sinners upon a full price; and this no creature was able to pay. He that was originally under the law, as a servant, could not be made under it, as a sacrifice; and therefore he that became responsible for our debt, must have none of his own. He that put himself under the law, on purpose to make a merit of his doing so, must have been eternally above it; and that can be true of none but God.

(2.) We trust him for our protection. He has given us promises. In him they are yea, and in him amen. We are preserved in Christ Jesus, and called, 1 Cor. i. 20; Jude 1. Now, certainly we can be kept by no less than "the power of *God*, through faith to salvation." 1 Pet. i. 5. This is the ground of our adoration. "To Him that is able to keep us from falling;" that is, to the Lord Jesus, whose mercy we look to for eternal life; to Him who can present us faultless before his glory with exceeding joy, "to the only wise God our Saviour be dominion and praise for ever." Jude 24, 25. See the proportion there is between what we expect from him and what we ascribe to him; between the blessing he gives to us, and the name that we give to him. We look upon him as one that keeps us; as Paul saith, "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom." 2 Tim. iv. 18. Nay, it is he that fills the place we are going to; we are presented "before his own glory." And he that does these things can be no other than "the only wise God our Saviour," and must have no less than "glory and dominion for ever."

(3.) We give up our souls to him in a dying hour. As that is the last, so it must be the greatest act of our faith and hope; and in this it will be hard to suppose that the Christian, who has all along been yielding himself to the Lord, should die believing in a creature. That it is to Christ this surrender must be made, I have often shown you. "Lord Jesus, receive my

spirit," said the martyr Stephen. "We look to Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith," says another. "I come quickly, and my reward is with me," says Christ himself. "Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus," says the Spirit in the name of every believer, with which he closes the whole book of God. The Bible begins with laying before us the creation of the heavens and the earth by a God; and it would be a flat ending to represent him who saves that earth and fills those heavens, as a derived agent. But as Christ comes to do more than ever the creation was, so we shall be able to say, "This our God is the God of salvation;" and it will be said to Zion, "Thy God reigneth."

3. There is no room for the question, whether *charity* is not another of those graces that supplies our religion as a principle, and gives a glory to our practice before all the world. The Apostle has told us plainly, that though "there abide these three—faith, hope, and charity, yet the greatest of these is charity;" that, without it, though we had all faith and could remove mountains, though we had all knowledge and could understand mysteries, they would each of them profit us nothing. Speaking with the tongues of men and angels, without charity, would make us only like a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal—all noise and no harmony, 1 Cor. xiii. 1—3. 13. Nevertheless, let me here observe to you a few particulars upon the notion that the Holy Scripture has given us of CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

(1.) It is sometimes used for the meek and humble temper of mind that we ought to have towards the whole world. We are bid to "honour all men," and be ready to "do good to all as we have opportunity; giving no offence to any, either Jew or gentile, or the Church of God;" being "blameless and harmless in the midst of a corrupt and perverse generation, among whom we are as lights in the world," 1 Pet. ii. 17; 1 Cor. x. 32; Phil. ii. 15. This is, indeed, a needful and a noble part of the conversation that becomes the gospel of Christ; but it does not express

the meaning of that charity that is greater than faith and hope.

(2.) The word is often made to signify the forbearance of injuries to those from whom we have received them. That though we see in our enemies no disposition to repentance, yet we must not say "I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord and he shall save us," Prov. xx. 22. This does indeed demonstrate religion to be the ruling principle; for Saul made it a maxim that obtains among them who know not the grace of God, "If a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away?" 1 Sam. xxiv. 19. But as our blessed Lord gives us a greater example than David did, so he has made it a perpetual branch of the royal law, not to render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing; for even Christ, when he was reviled, reviled not again, and when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to him that judges righteously. And so is the will of God, that with well-doing we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. Servants must be subject to their masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward; for this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully, 1 Pet. iii. 9; 1 Pet. ii. 15. 18, 19.

This, also, though it is a necessary character in the people of God, cannot be the charity which is so much admired by the apostle, and which is of so much importance to every believer: for, he is not here describing a temper to enemies, but that which ought to breathe through all our behaviour to the saints. As we "are the body of Christ, and members in particular," the charity we are to follow after is that which may edify the Church, 1 Cor. xii. 27.

(3.) Charity sometimes denotes a readiness to forgive, and receive into favour, those who have abused us. This is different from what I mentioned under the former head; for there I designed no more than a not returning upon them their own iniquities, laying aside revenge; but it is a great deal more than this, when we will use them as friends, and be reconciled

to them, and so pass over the transgression as if it had never been, making those who have done us harm the men of our counsel and confidence. As Achish treated David, saying, "He has made his people Israel utterly to abhor him, therefore he shall be my servant for ever;" and afterwards, "I will make thee keeper of my head." This is what may be our duty, and, if we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, it will be our pleasure. We are bid to "love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use us, that we may be the children of our heavenly Father." Now, these phrases are certainly to be taken two ways; we are by no means to confound them, but must distinguish upon the carriage of those who have done us injuries.

First, Some of those that have hated and cursed us, continue to do so. Now, here blessing and loving them, can mean no more than negatives, not cursing them, and not hating them, doing them no harm; or, if it calls us to any more, we do it to reclaim them; according to that rule, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head; be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," Rom. xii. 18—21. Whilst they manifest no signs of repentance, I am indeed to remember that vengeance belongs to God, and must not avenge myself with my own hand; but it is impossible, under the violence of that wicked temper, that I should take any pleasure in such people. Nor does religion oblige me to do a thing so gross and foolish, as to put myself into their hands, in whom I see no disposition to peace. We should rather wish for wings like a dove, that we may fly away, and be at rest, wander far off, and remain in the wilderness, Psal. lv. 6—8. If an enemy reproaches me, I must hide myself from him. "God himself shall hear and afflict them, even he that abides of old," Psal. lv. 19. But then,

Secondly, Several of those who have cursed and hated us are ashamed of it; they confess their faults, and desire to be restored into that favour which either their imprudence or our impatience has made them lose. Now here, loving these and doing them good, takes into it a great deal more. We are to act to them as God does to us. He may spare without repentance, but he never pardons without it. There may be forbearance and long-suffering, but there is no forgiveness; and in this he is a pattern to us. Charity to those who have been injurious, and continue so, is doing them no harm; but the charity that we should use to one who humbles himself, and is afflicted with a sense of the wrong that he has done, is of a more benevolent temper. "Let the righteous smite me, and it shall be a kindness; let him reprove me, and it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head," Psal. cxli. 5. Praying for the former sort, is only that God may convince them, show them their error that they have exceeded, and grant them repentance. But when all this is done in them, praying for them is the fruit of brotherly love. A friendship thus restored, is like a bone set anew after it has been broken. Some say it is stronger and firmer than it was. Whether that be so or not, I cannot tell; but thus it is in the case before us.

Two persons whom the grace of God has reconciled, who have felt the bitterness of quarrelling, and who come to understand one another in a true light, are likely to be more useful and endeared than ever they have been; because the friendship rises from a mortification of lust, from a sense of God's love to us, and some exercise of ours to him. It is all godliness; and I can never think that Christians either feel or show a greater power of religion, than in their obedience to that command, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed," James v. 16.

Job and his friends had lived in a prosperous acquaintance for some years; high words pass between them, when his affliction had brought them together;

and, perhaps, a great deal of crime in the conversation on both sides. He charges them with cruelty, they him with unbelief. "Elihu's wrath was kindled against Job, because he had justified himself rather than God; and against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job," Job xxxii. 2, 3. But observe how this ends. God turns Job's captivity when he prays for his friends, and he tells them that it was his prayer that should be accepted for them, Job xlii. 10. What a happy close was this, of a debate that seemed to be strengthened on both sides, and never like to expire! They come to see that the man whom they accused of denying Providence, of speaking atheistical language, and uttering rebellion against God, must be their advocate at the throne of grace; and he who complained of injuries by these people, must not have a blessing upon himself, till he has begged one for them.

This advantage can the grace of God teach us to make of the wiles of Satan. The friendship which piety restores, is a thousand times better than that which mere acquaintance began. Onesimus was a servant to Philemon, but very disobedient; he runs away from his master, but the grace of God follows, and finds him when he was lost: a principle of religion sets all his thoughts in a toil to go back again. The Apostle, who had been his spiritual father, must be also his temporal peace-maker. The person by whom he was brought to God, is the same that restores him to Philemon; and a noble argument he has in his pacific design: "Perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him forever; not now as a servant, but above a servant—a brother beloved, especially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord?" What the issue of this proposal was, we are not told; but I think the Apostle has given us ground for our confidence, in what he says of his own: "Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say."

(4.) Charity is often used to signify no more than liberality or external beneficence, upon which I would desire you to make one observation, That though this is a needful part of charity, it is far from being the greatest thing in it. That it is necessary we are plainly told; "whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" 1 John iii. 17; there must be outward kindness to demonstrate inward compassion. "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say to them, Be ye warmed, and filled, and give them not those things that are needful to the body, what doth it profit?" James ii. 15, 16. It profits neither you nor them. "As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially to the household of faith," Gal. vi. 10. It is a faithful saying, and what we are to affirm constantly, that they who believe in God be careful to maintain good works, which are good and profitable to men. Rich men are not to be allured, desired, and importuned, but charged to do good, to be ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store a good foundation for the time to come, laying hold on eternal life, Tit. iii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.

Thus you see these external favours are necessary; but yet they are far from being the main thing in our charity, as you will soon find if you do but consider, that the poor, who are "rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom," would be deficient in the best of all graces, if there was no charity but in giving. And, on the other hand, the Apostle has laid down a text, which ought to strike an awe quite through our souls: "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned, and have not *charity*, it profits me nothing," 1 Cor. xiii. 3. What a tremendous proposition is here, that a man shall bestow all his goods on the poor, and yet not have charity! He may do this, as superstitious people have often done, without any love to God; he is only frightened into it by the darkness of an unsanctified conscience. This shows, that the grace we speak of lies within, and takes its name, not from what

is in the hands, but from what is in the heart. Paul was as charitable as David or Solomon, not in what he gave, but in what he felt.

(5.) Charity, in this place, signifies that temper of mind that we should have to the people of God, considered in their religious character. It is more than a meekness to all the world, and a patience under injury. In the former, we regard people as men; in the latter, we strive to conquer them as enemies; but here we look upon them as "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," as those "who have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God our Saviour," Heb. iii. 1; 2 Pet. i. 1.

If a person is no Christian, or no friend, we are to do him no harm; but he is not within the reach of that charity which the Apostle is writing of; for he lays it upon the ground of our Lord's own rule: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another," John xiii. 35. Certainly by this love to one another, he means a great deal more than the love of courtesy to mankind in general, or the love of pity to enemies. These would never show them to be his disciples; *that* is not loving the brotherhood, loving as brethren. Love one another; and this is love, that we walk after his commandment, that, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it, 1 Pet. ii. 17; iii. 8; 2 John 5, 6.

Such a charity as this is what the Holy Ghost produces in us; nor can we have it any other way than by an Almighty creation. It is not peculiar to certain schemes, nor the prerogative of some opinions, but a personal grace. I may think as another does about the doctrines of the gospel, and yet want his charity. If he has this grace, he is as much born to that as to any other principle. As his *faith* is of the operation of *God*, as he is filled with *hope* by the power of the *Holy Ghost;* so the fruit of the same *Spirit* is *love*, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, and patience. It is only as the elect of *God*, holy and beloved, that we put on bowels of mercies, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and for-

giving one another; and above all, putting on *charity*, which is the bond of perfectness. Gal. v. 22; Col. iii. 12.

It is the vanity of some schemes to make men talk of charity; but God leaves them deficient in that, on purpose to let all the world see that none but he can give it. It is not engrossed by a party, as we cannot but own by observing, that where it is most talked of it is least practised; like the people who were always bawling out, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these," who seemed in their disposition to be furthest from the temple; for they stole, and murdered, and committed adultery, and burned incense to Baal, and walked after other gods, and came into that holy place, saying, We are delivered to do all these abominations. Jer. vii. 4. 9, 10. The Scripture has recommended no other charity than that which "suffers long and is kind, envies not, vaunts not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, seeks not her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth."

(6.) This grace, like all the rest, is imperfect in us now; and therefore that we may abound in it, we should use the means that are appointed. There must be a caution over our own hearts. Look diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, and a root of bitterness spring up. Put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you with all malice; and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. Heb. xii. 15; Eph. iv. 22. 31, 32. Believe that the opposite to this is a lust of the flesh, and that Satan will do all he can to hinder us in it. He will allow us to make our boast of charity, or any other grace, provided we do not live in the practice.

(7.) Charity is never to be separated from other graces, much less opposed to them. A man who says, You are for faith, and I for charity, is as ridiculous as

if he should say, You are for feeding, and I am for breathing. They are both necessary, not only to us, but to one another. He will make but poor work with his criticism, who advances the lungs above the stomach, so as to employ all his care about the former, and none about the latter. We read of "purifying our hearts by obeying the truth unto an unfeigned love of the brethren," and are ordered to "love one another with a pure heart fervently:" 1 Pet. i. 22: where you may observe these four things,

First, That all brotherly love begins in conversion, with "purifying the soul." An unregenerate person may have a good temper, a civil deportment, and from lower considerations take delight in the company of God's people; but he has no more charity than he has faith or hope. "Love is of God; every one that loveth is born of God, and knows God." 1 John iv. 7.

Secondly, The Spirit is the author of this grace. Though it is spoken of as your act, "Ye have purified your souls," yet it is "through the Spirit." As it is said in another place, "Ye are taught of God to love one another." There is as great a work needful upon your souls to love one whom you have seen, as one whom you have not seen. "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren." No other than the Almighty arm, that gives us a look into heaven, can dispose our minds to a right esteem of the saints. He that makes them "the excellent of the earth," must make them "all our delight."

Thirdly, It was by "obeying the truth," (which supposes hearing and believing it,) that their souls were thus purified to "an unfeigned love of the brethren." They were not left in error or in darkness; charity comes, as faith does, "by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." A man that does not know the truth, cannot obey it; and a man who does not obey it, can have none of this brotherly love. He may have what he calls charity, and what he calls faith; but they are false, and will be thrown out at the first payment. It signifies nothing what we give

religious names to; God knows his own work, and will approve of no other. He has made a love of the brethren to be the effect of obedience to the truth; and if we make it any thing else, it is no plant that our heavenly Father has planted, but shall be rooted up, and thrown into the fire.

Fourthly, He exhorts them upon the ground of what the Holy Spirit had already given them, that as in obedience to the truth their souls were purified to an unfeigned love of the brethren, they ought "to love one another with a pure heart fervently." This is but acting up to their nature; I do not mean their first, but their second nature, which they are made partakers of through the influence of those "exceeding great and precious promises" that are given to them.

(8.) As the result of all these observations, I would further tell you, that a belief of this *mystery* in my text, (the Deity of Him who was manifest in the flesh, and received up into glory,) is a belief of *the truth*, by which the Holy Spirit has purified the souls of men to an unfeigned love of the brethren. This is a doctrine of charity, as well as of all other godliness, as I think will appear from these following particulars. It gives us the greatest tenderness for those that are in error, it is a foundation of esteem for those that love the truth, and it lays before us the best arguments for a brotherly kindness.

1. Our belief of any mystery, but especially of this, is the ground of forbearance and meekness to them who are yet in error; and the reason is plain, because as a mystery is what none but God can reveal, and what none but God can impress, so it employs my pity, and not my anger, to them who will not own it.

People who advance the schemes which they call *rational*, are impatient with any who have more or less light than themselves. What a strait path has a certain author cut out for his charity! exposing, censuring, and condemning those who say, that the Son of God was not derived, and doing the same, by a

back stroke, against them who say, there was any moment of the derivation. He thinks it is very clear from nature, that there can be but one person who is the Supreme God; and yet it is clear from Scripture, that more than one person is spoken of under that title. He is sensible the Socinians were quite wrong in making Christ no more than a man; the Arians were as bad in making him a creature; and the Christian church, in so many ages and places, is most of all condemned for saying, he is "the same" with the Father "in substance, equal in power and glory."

So that it is very hard, when a man has got a scheme of his own, to keep him in temper with any one else; because he does not pretend this doctrine is revealed to him; it is the glory of his opinion, that it is void of mystery, and therefore every one who does not come into it, must be slothful, or ignorant, an enthusiast, or a tritheist, of an unpolite and confused head. That these are the effects of man's wisdom when it pretends to measure God's, is notorious from the sad experience of our day. It has brought among us debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults. Hence we have had evil surmisings, and perverse disputings of men, who suppose that gain is godliness, 2 Cor. xii. 20; 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5. This seems to be the natural consequence of such proceedings. For, if I say, as these authors do in their title pages, that here is "a scheme of the Trinity, not only agreeable to Scripture, but no ways repugnant to the old philosophy, or to human reason;" a man that does not come into it represents me as mistaking the Scripture, and saying what is contrary to reason; and therefore in this dissent the charge of folly is insinuated on both sides. He thinks there is no reason in my opinion, and I must think there is as little in his opposition. We are charged to beware, lest any man spoil us through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. Let us not heed those who intrude into things

that they have not seen, vainly puffed up in their fleshly mind, and not holding the head, Col. ii. 8. 18, 19.

But they who say, that "great is the *mystery* of godliness," leave no room for persecution; for the very title we give our doctrine intimates that flesh and blood cannot make it known. And it is an absurdity of the darkest, as well as the vilest nature, to punish men for not believing what is above them, as much as not seeing what is behind them. The apostle directs us to leave people in the hands of Christ. "If any man be otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to him." It is an argument for the meekness that should be used in the instruction of those who oppose themselves, that peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth, 2 Tim. ii. 25. They never can acknowledge the truth without repentance, and they never can have *that* till God gives it.

Indeed a good man looks upon an error in this point to be of a dangerous nature, because Christ himself has said, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." But though this is a powerful argument for us to endeavour the turning of a sinner from the error of his way, yet the transcendency of these things to human reason ought to banish all external force and violence from our ways of promoting them. A mystery is never conveyed into the mind by a punishment upon the body; and he that allows a man no other choice than a church or a jail, to be a proselyte or a prisoner, has given a mortal wound to the very cause he contends for.

I would also further observe to you, that it is no persecution, nor the least degree of it, to exclude persons from what they are not fit for. You do no injury in keeping those from the table who are not of the family. There is a happy medium between forcing them to enter in, and plaguing them for staying out. Neither of these is lawful; but it is no harm to keep those out that should not be in. It was the glory of an Asian church, that she tried and could

not bear those who said they were apostles, and were not, and had found them liars, Rev. ii. 2.

If a man does not believe the great truths of the Christian religion, he is neither fit for my communion nor for my abhorrence. We are to receive one another as God has received us all; but where there are no marks of God's receiving, there can be no rule for ours. He that denies the mysteries of religion may be pitied, and ought not to be punished by man for his error; but there is no more harm in keeping him out of the church, than there is in denying the bread of a child to the clamour of a stranger.

2. The noblest foundation for charity is a mutual acknowledgment of the truth that is after godliness. Our hearts are comforted, being knit together in love, to the acknowledging of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, Col. ii. 2. We follow righteousness, faith, charity, and peace, with them that call on the Lord Jesus out of a pure heart, 2 Tim. ii. 22. Do but inquire into a late scheme of peace, and what a strange mixture is comprehended in it. Some have their standing there, who are for the truth, because they choose to conceal it. They stand on the other side, when strangers carry us away captive, and foreigners enter into our gates. They should not have looked on in the day of their brethren, nor have rejoiced in the day of our destruction, nor spoken proudly in the day of our distress, Obad. 11, 12.

Others make up the number who oppose themselves to the doctrine of the gospel, and these are of different sorts. Some run into the Sabellian scheme, as they do who cannot give the title of Supreme God to the Son, because they say it belongs only to the three persons considered together. Others are tinctured with unsublimated Arianism; they tell us the Son is co-eternal with the Father, and yet derived from him; that he is of an inferior nature; and that the Spirit is not called God at all, nor has any title to our worship.

Some will give adoration to Jesus Christ, and others will not; and though it is but a few years since the

opposition to our Lord's Divinity was managed by the Socinians, yet now they are spoken and written against with contempt. Socinus himself saith, the Arians are not Christians; and they are out of his debt, by declaring they would not admit a Socinian to baptism.

Besides, a union upon concealment of principle is nonsense. What sort of a charity is that, which makes us agree with people we know not why, and run after them we know not where, and own them as brethren for we know not what? But when persons "hold the head," and are visibly concerned for the common salvation and the glory of Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours, it throws a veil over our lower divisions. Aristarchus, Paul's fellow prisoner, Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, and Jesus, called Justus, were of the circumcision; and yet these only were his fellow-workers to the kingdom of God, and were a comfort to him, Col. iv. 10, 11. We are neither in temper nor at leisure to attend the disputes that have been stretched out with violence. We can, then, conceal the faith that we ought to have to ourselves, on purpose to maintain that which ought to be spoken of throughout the world.

3. This doctrine gives us the best argument for charity, because God has revealed himself to others upon these articles that have been of importance to us. They have obtained the like precious faith with us. Grace and peace are multiplied through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. And it gives us ground to hope we shall meet in a better world, and sing over that doctrine in eternal praises, which now fills us with a silent wonder. The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament. This is the great provocation to love and good works, that we see the day approaching, the day of knowledge and glory, when the sun shall no more be our light by day, nor the moon by night, but the Lord himself will be an everlasting glory. As for a faith we know not, we are not like to follow it, nor can we have any

thoughts about the end of their conversation, whose works are in the dark. When men see not the glorious gospel of Christ, whether it is the god of this world who has blinded their eyes we cannot tell; but the knowledge of the truth is our preparative for heaven, and we look upon those that have it, as our fellow-travellers thither. And it strikes a life through all our conversation to think we are going to a place where those doctrines will be no more denied, but the mystery of heaven be opened to swell and delight our souls for ever.

CHAPTER V.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE SUBJECT.

I SHALL now dismiss this glorious text that gives us the main branches of our religion, or, as it is here called, "the mystery of godliness;" a doctrine that is revealed from heaven, and promotes a Divine purity upon earth, that employs our faith and animates our practice. All that I need to do at parting with such a subject, is only to look back upon the road over which we have gone. The distribution of what I have to say at the close of this great work, you may take under the following heads:

1. I would give some friendly advice to those who are not convinced either of the truth or importance of this doctrine, which I have laid before you in such an abundant way.

2. I shall make some little application to those whose hearts God has touched with the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. And,

3. I would give you a short account of myself, with relation to this glorious Gospel of the ever blessed God, which has been committed to my trust,

(1.) We may suppose, after all that has been said, that there are yet gainsayers amongst us, to whom

the word of the Lord is a reproach, and who are weary of hearing it. Our Gospel is hid from them. "The Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, and having their conscience seared with a hot iron," 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. But as they are still within the joyful sound, as it is not too late to call after them, so I would, from a hearty concern for their welfare, leave these few admonitions with them.

1. Though you cannot believe this doctrine, do not indulge yourselves in a profane contempt of it. "Be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong. Surely he scorns the scorners." A very little wit will serve to ridicule the mysteries of the Gospel, and make you agreeable to those that walk after their own ungodly lusts. But what do these sports of infidelity end in? they may tend to harden conscience in others, but they will wofully soften it in yourselves. This is the way to a double darkness upon a sick-bed, and to make death a thousand times more the king of terrors than he is in himself. "What will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation that shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help, and where will ye leave your glory, Isa. x. 3. What do you get by tossing out a jest upon the great salvation, but only to be stung with despair, when you come to find that there is no hope for you, and no spirit in you?

People may have their doubts about any doctrine of religion. The best of God's children have complained of a wicked heart of unbelief; but there is a wide difference between those principles of opposition to the truth which are our burden, and those that a corrupt nature will esteem to be our glory. I remember a passage in the works of Mr. Isaac Ambrose, to this purpose, that one told him he had attended a long time upon Mr. Richard Vines, an eminent preacher in London, who had managed the controversy between us and the Jews with great learning and piety. And when he had gone through his arguments, he addressed himself to the people in such words as

these: 'Now,' said he 'perhaps many of you will think that I have fully confuted the Jews, and given them such an evidence of our religion, as they will not be able to answer; and indeed I do take the reasons to be above the opposition of gainsayers; but yet I would embrace the feet of that man who would assure me, that I should never again question in my own soul, whether Jesus was the Messiah or not.' Upon which, saith the historian, a general groan went through the congregation, as if every person shared in the concern, that a minister so eminent should complain of an unbelief that would hazard the foundation of our most holy faith.

Indeed there is no truth in all religion that Satan will not tempt us to blaspheme, and to which our own corrupt hearts will not supply the seeds of infidelity. "The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes." Luther complains that his mind was filled with *horribilia de Deo, et terribilia de fide:* such thoughts of God as were horrible, and such of faith as were dreadful.

But how vile and dangerous must the case of that sinner be, who does not mourn over this unbelief as his burden, and keep it all concealed within himself as that which is not fit to be ventured abroad; but rather "glories in his shame," and throws out the filth of a heart that is desperately wicked in raw and rude arguments of blasphemy; like "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame!" Have a care of increasing to this ungodliness. Do not make light of that which the Holy Spirit has delivered with all the solemnity that words can have. And, in particular, let me warn you against one sleight of these men that "lie in wait to deceive;" and that is this; they endeavour to break your concern for a doctrine by telling you, 'It is possible you may disbelieve it, and not be damned; that surely none will dare to say, that they who deny this opinion are all vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.' What low reasoning is this! how mean in so great an argument as the Di-

vinity of Christ! how trifling in so great an affair as the salvation of souls! We see that they who perished in the wilderness "entered not in because of unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it; for to us was the gospel preached as well as to them, but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. We who have believed do enter into rest," Heb. iii. 19; iv. 1—3.

It is nothing to me how many errors may be consistent with a state of pardon, I can have no hopes of being saved but by the love of the truth. God has joined together "a sanctification of the Spirit, and a belief of the truth," as the way of my salvation; and I have no authority to drop the one, any more than the other. When I desire a person to go in a safe road, and not to travel upon a precipice that may turn his head, and make him lose his life, I act a friendly part; and if another persuades him to run the hazard, because it is possible he *may* escape, he that talks at this rate, if he is not an enemy, must be looked upon as a trifler; for though others have gone secure through these dangers, yet what recompense is that to a man who by venturing is dashed in pieces? Therefore do you build up one another in your most holy faith, and have compassion on those that differ. We are not called to determine the state of Mahometans, Jews, or Pagans, who can scarce say they have heard the fame of Jesus with their ears. Nor is it our business to say of any who are cut off without giving a testimony to the truth, what is become of them. "Secret things belong to God." "Judge nothing before the time."

But is my charity to make me an infidel? must I either pronounce sentence on one who has denied the Lord that bought him, or be indifferent to what the Scripture itself has called "damnable heresies?" Is there no medium between censuring another and guarding myself? There are "strong delusions" that some are given up to, who have no pleasure in the

truth, but in unrighteousness. Several "people believe a lie, that they all may be damned:" and these things are written not for us to point out the men, but to fence against the opinions. Whilst we follow peace with all men, we must look diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God, 2 Pet. ii. 1; 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12; Heb. xii. 14, 15.

2. Let me further beseech you not to run into the common extravagance of those who deny the Deity of Christ. Shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker. In a great house there are vessels to dishonor, 2 Tim. ii. 16, 17.

One would think it very possible for people to be in that error without going any further; but as God has told us, so we find it, that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," 2 Tim. iii. 13.

The only question is, and ever must be, whether this doctrine is revealed in Scripture or not. If it is not, there is no other evidence that we can possibly bring in as the ground of your faith; and therefore he that opposes it fairly, has nothing to do with its conformity to reason and the maxims of philosophy. These we are warned against as so much "vain deceit." The rudiments of the world and the traditions of men are not after Christ. False teachers are of the world, and therefore speak they of the world. Col. ii. 8; 1 John iv. 5. It may be a truth, and yet appear in none of *that* light; it is of a superior nature. If God has told us it some other way than by the understanding that his Spirit has given to all mankind, it is certain their cause is lost. For "we speak not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, which come to nought; but the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory," 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7.

If he has said it in his word, the man who thinks he reads it there is never to be convinced but by one of these ways; either that what he takes for a Divine revelation is not so, or that he has mistaken the sense

of the words. The controversy of our day runs fast into the former question; though, as some of their writers own, the matter is not yet ripe. Now, observe what danger people are entangled in by departing from the truth.

First, Some take refuge for this error in another that is more general, that there can be "no certainty in matters of faith." This makes a Christian's hope to be no more than a silly dream, and his practice no better than a perpetual ramble. This is one reason why we continue in the things that we have learned and been assured of, because we know of whom we have learned them, and have known the Holy Scriptures that are able to make us wise to salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 14, 15. Believers have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things. We must continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and not be moved away from the hope of the gospel, which we have heard; rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as we have been taught, 1 John ii. 20; Col. i. 23; ii. 7. When we talk to the Jews, we fight uncertainly, as those that beat the air, if there is no certainty in matters of faith. And when the martyrs overcame by the word of their testimony, as they lived they knew not how, so they died they knew not why. Here is the seal of blood given to mere *enthusiasm!* But they were supported with the hope that the Spirit witnessed with their spirits, that the cause for which they suffered was of God. Yet,

Secondly, All this mighty and gracious work of the Holy Ghost is profaned with contempt; so that, though he has done so much in giving us the Scriptures, and is promised to lead us into the way of all truth, yet we are told there is no such thing as "the way of truth," and therefore it is a jest to speak of his leading us thither. These are men "blaspheming what they know not." But he that overcomes the world is he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God; and the Spirit bears witness, because the Spirit is truth, Jude 10; 1 John v. 5, 6.

Thirdly, This brings them either to deny the Divine

revelation, or to curtail it. Some are at work to tear out single verses, others run away with entire books, though plagues are threatened to the man who either adds to these things, or takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, Rev. xxii. 18, 19. Some will make the words of Scripture not to be a declaration of the truth, but a cover of heresy; handling it deceitfully, and walking in craftiness.

Fourthly, This runs into a contempt of God's people, who have not only possessed the doctrine in words, but believed it in the whole course of their experience. Their steadiness is abhorred, their seriousness is laughed at. We cannot but see that Divine grace has made a public difference between some and others, and therefore it is never safe to refuse the precious, and choose the vile. The man who gives up himself to prayer, who reads the Scriptures, and with a devout importunity fetches light from above, *may be* in an error; but whatever I may think of his notions, it would be wrong in me to disdain him, and admire those who take the name of God in vain. I ought to purge myself from these, and follow charity with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. These are spots in our feasts of charity, 2 Tim. ii. 21, 22; Jude 12.

Fifthly, Take heed that these things do not ruin practical religion. No new opinions concerning Christ can be your protection in the neglect of his worship. I fear it may be observed of some families, that as these doctrines have come in, prayer has gone out. Now, whatever light people get, yet if their zeal for holiness is lost, if the Sabbath is defiled, the name of Jesus treated with no reverence, and his worship attended with no fervour, your hearts are not right in the sight of God, and it is a dreadful sign that your heads are wrong too.

3. Another advice I would give you is this, be open to conviction. Let the truth be its own recommendation. Do not struggle against evidence; there is nothing got by stifling that, but a reproach of conscience. No agreements or acquaintance are of so much value

as the doctrines of the gospel. What do you get by depriving Christ of his Deity, but a floating faith, a misgiving hope, and an undetermined practice? Search the Scriptures daily, whether the things be so or not.

What is the advantage of having a Saviour who is not God? What are your souls afraid of in supposing that he who paid your ransom was equal to him who received it? To say that this is a contradiction, is only to involve the wisdom of God in a slander; for if he has revealed it, it must be true and right; if he has not, why are his own people ensnared? How come men, that have always shown a true regard about happiness, to mistake it in the dependence of their faith, in the direction of their prayer, and the comforts of a death-bed?

Is it likely that they, who live as without God in the world, whatever other advantages they have, know the deep things of God, the wisdom that lies in a mystery? and that the humble praying Christians, the generation that have sought his face, are suffered to live and die in an error? Whatever you may make of politeness, it is never to be set upon a level with piety in matters of pure revelation. The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way. If any man do his will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. He has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, Psal. xxv. 9; John vii. 17; Mat. xi. 25.

Your danger comes from those who care not whether there is any other world or not; men that rebel against the light, and abide not in the paths thereof. It is all one to them whether Christ be God or a creature, because they are unconcerned whether he is a Saviour or an enemy. Such are incontinent, fierce, despisers of them that are good, that have scarcely a form of godliness, but certainly deny the power thereof; lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, 2 Tim. iii. 3—5. Whom would you resemble in your latter end; those that live in pride, and die in darkness; or such as walk humbly with their God, and go

off rejoicing in the hope of his glory? Remember those that have taught you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Heb. xiii. 7.

4. Beg the Divine teachings; do not despise his admonitions who has promised to guide our feet. I fear the naming of this direction in these terms will be a disadvantage to it: and as our age are more afraid of enthusiasm than of atheism, they do not like some phrases that the Scripture has used. If that is the case, till he who "convinces the world of sin," even of their "unbelief," does his office, and tries his power, it is in vain for us to argue; we call after the winds, press the rocks, and court the waves.

But I hope there may be some among you, who though you have doubts, yet do not despise him who alone can give you the victory. You may be sure, on which side soever the truth lies, it is upon no other ground than the testimony of the Spirit *in* Scripture, and with no other evidence than the testimony of the Spirit *to* Scripture; and therefore it is no begging the question to send you to your knees. Whatever party laughs at this, and makes a jest of the witness that is given in an answer to an humble prayer, are either opposite to the truth, or unworthy of it. Pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, Eph. i. 16, 17.

(2.) I would address myself to those that are convinced of this doctrine.—If these sermons have been blessed to the opening of your eyes, or the settling of your faith, you and I have reason to be thankful for them. I would hope there is one argument, that these labours are not altogether in vain; because, though the continuance of this subject has been unexpected,* and by me I am sure undesigned, yet they were always delivered to very great assemblies. And, notwithstanding the curiosity there is in our nature to be entertained with variety, yet I have not observed any

[* The first sermon was preached March 30, 1718, the last, Oct. 9. 1723.—Am. Ed.]

abatement of your numbers, or your zeal to receive the love of the truth.

The uneasiness of some, who could either be drowsy upon design, or angry without it, has been no further my trouble than for their sakes. For whether they care for it or not, they have heard what in a little time they shall feel, that He whom they despise is God, and "it is hard for them to kick against the pricks." However, these examples of sleepy, lolling, and discontented hearers, have been very few. I have had the satisfaction to see, that there are some whom the truth of God has not drawn, but it has driven them; and as they did not like to hear what they did not love to admire, so they were afraid to meet what they could not answer. The insinuations that this doctrine is *enthusiasm*, and the manner of promoting it too violent, are only desperate volleys of those that quit the field, who, when they are broken for disputants, set up for railers. But to you, my brethren, who have not been ashamed of Christ and his words, in this corrupt and untoward generation, let me apply these two directions.

1. See that you feel in your own souls the influence of what you believe. To what purpose is the manifestation of a God in the flesh, if he who took upon him your nature is not allowed to have any concern in your happiness? Why is he "justified in the Spirit," if your spirits are an exception to that honour? if he there meets with nothing but unbelief, rebellion, and darkness? To what purpose does the Holy Ghost give him a testimony which you will not receive; but, instead of that, suffer yourselves to be guided by a reason that is vile and cloudy? What a conviction will that be, that He who is "seen of angels," to be admired and adored, should not be seen by you, so as to discover any form or comeliness in him! Why is He who is "preached to the gentiles" mentioned with any abatement of his character? why must not they who are his witnesses to mankind, own him to be a God? If he is "believed on in the world," what will become of those who, in

contempt of these examples, will not come unto him, that they may have life? and what an aggravation will his being "received into glory" leave upon your refusal, your infidelity, and impenitence? Therefore see to it, that your experiences correspond with this doctrine, that they are both to one key. When you hear of his being God, feel that your faith is employed in the deepest adorations, in a continual homage, in all the fervour and duty of love. As he is preached to you gentiles, so endeavour to see, that you are part of the world that believe in him. Follow the glory that he is received up to, with breathings after it, and a dependence upon him to bring you thither.

2. Consider your obligations to own what you have believed. Hold forth the word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all; for the same cause also do ye joy and rejoice with me, Phil. ii. 16—18. It was a great deal of opposition that Christ went through for your sakes, and resolve that you will run all dangers for his.

Is a "God manifest in the flesh," a God lost in that flesh? Must his taking upon him your nature be an argument why you will not be witnesses to his? This condescension is what he designed both for your happiness, and his own glory. Do you pretend to secure the one, and be unconcerned about the other? It is true, he does not want your assistance in another world, nor indeed in this. He that formed the mouths of men can set the voices of the universe going. He needs none of your learning, but is able to ordain strength out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, to still the enemy and the avenger, Psal. viii. 2. Nevertheless, he puts it to the trial, what you think his honour is worth; whether it is not set at too great a rate, if your reputation is to suffer in the service of this glorious cause. Can you deny those that deny him? It will be impossible to believe, if you receive honour one from another. This is given

as the reason why "many that believed" in Christ, that is, were thoroughly convinced of his title and his perfections, yet "did not confess him;" because they were afraid of being "put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God," John xii. 42, 43.

If this is your case, if you think to maintain the honour of Christ, and the favour of those that oppose it, it is a desperate attempt; you are striving to do what our dear Lord tells us no man can do, "serve two masters." This coalescence can succeed but a very little while, for in time you must "hold to the one and despise the other." Let me therefore beg of you, not to be afraid of men, or fear their revilings, but sanctify this Lord of hosts in your souls, and make him to be your fear and your dread.

This is a courage that may, in one sense, be said to bear its own charges. The more you use, the more you will have. A man's cowardice begins from himself; it is an indulged carnality; we make it our crime, and God makes it our judgment. He that fears a Redeemer, fears nothing else; he that does not fear him, fears every thing. A person who dares not let go the Deity of his Saviour, dares do every thing to promote it. But he that is unconcerned about that, will be always a burden to himself: fear will be on every side.

It is a sweet hazard that you run in this cause, and a glorious infamy that the malice of men has clothed you with. To them it is an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God; to you it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but to suffer for his sake, Phil. i. 28, 29. If you suffer the reproach of Christ, which the fearful and unbelieving reckon the greatest mischief in the world, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God shall rest upon you. On their part he is evil spoken of, but on yours he is glorified, 1 Pet. iv. 14.

(3.) I promised to give you some little account of myself, which you know I do not use to trouble you with; nor should I have done it now, were it not in

duty to the glorious doctrine for which God has honoured me, both as a witness and a sufferer. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; and I thank the Lord who has enabled me, counting me faithful, and putting me into the ministry. The text I have been now upon, is what my thoughts were turned to above twenty years ago. And I cannot but regard that hand of Providence that orders all our steps, that I have so long been kept off from engaging in a subject that gave me many pleasing views at a distance. He that fixes the bounds of our habitation, settles also the times before appointed, and he makes every thing beautiful in its season. It is by his over-ruling counsel that these designs should never be brought into life till they were most needful.

I must further observe to you, that we were actually engaged upon this text above eleven months before our contentions broke out, that are now become like the bars of a castle. I little thought, at my entrance upon the Mysteries of Godliness, that I should be driven into the field of battle, or that a zeal for those doctrines would make me the abhorrence of friends, and the contempt of strangers. But a wise and gracious God had thus appointed it, to try whether, in the service and defence of the truth, we could live upon the honour that comes from him only.

It is two years and seven months since I began these sermons. I had no more in view than about ten or twelve discourses; but I have found myself refreshed and enlarged in these studies beyond what I have been conscious to, upon any other subject. And therefore, though I could not be untouched with the defaming of many, and especially considering how unexpected and undeserved it was, yet the doctrine was so much the joy of my soul, that the ill usage of men is what I could both neglect in the closet and despise from the pulpit.

I had thought to have insisted only on three or four texts in maintenance of our Lord's Divinity, and I am apt to think they have rather grown to so many hundreds; which I endeavoured to lay before you, not

under the interpretations of men, not as driven in with the authority of councils and synods, but in their own light; by a manifestation of the truth, commending myself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And I do now with the greatest solemnity affirm to you, and appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that I have not perverted one Scripture to serve a cause which I did not think the Holy Spirit had designed it for. I am sensible some are grown weary of the subject, and are gone out from us, and by these we are charged with heat and fury about a needless debate.

If people are angry that the truth is defended, it is well if they do not want some concern about its being opposed. But I am so sure that this doctrine is of God, and so persuaded that it is fundamental to all your hopes, that I think my work and my life can never be closed with any thing of more importance. I will therefore conclude with a doxology, that is to be understood of Christ: Now TO THE KING ETERNAL, IMMORTAL, INVISIBLE, THE ONLY WISE GOD, BE HONOUR AND GLORY FOR EVER AND EVER, AMEN, 1 Tim. i. 17.

THE END.

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